



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

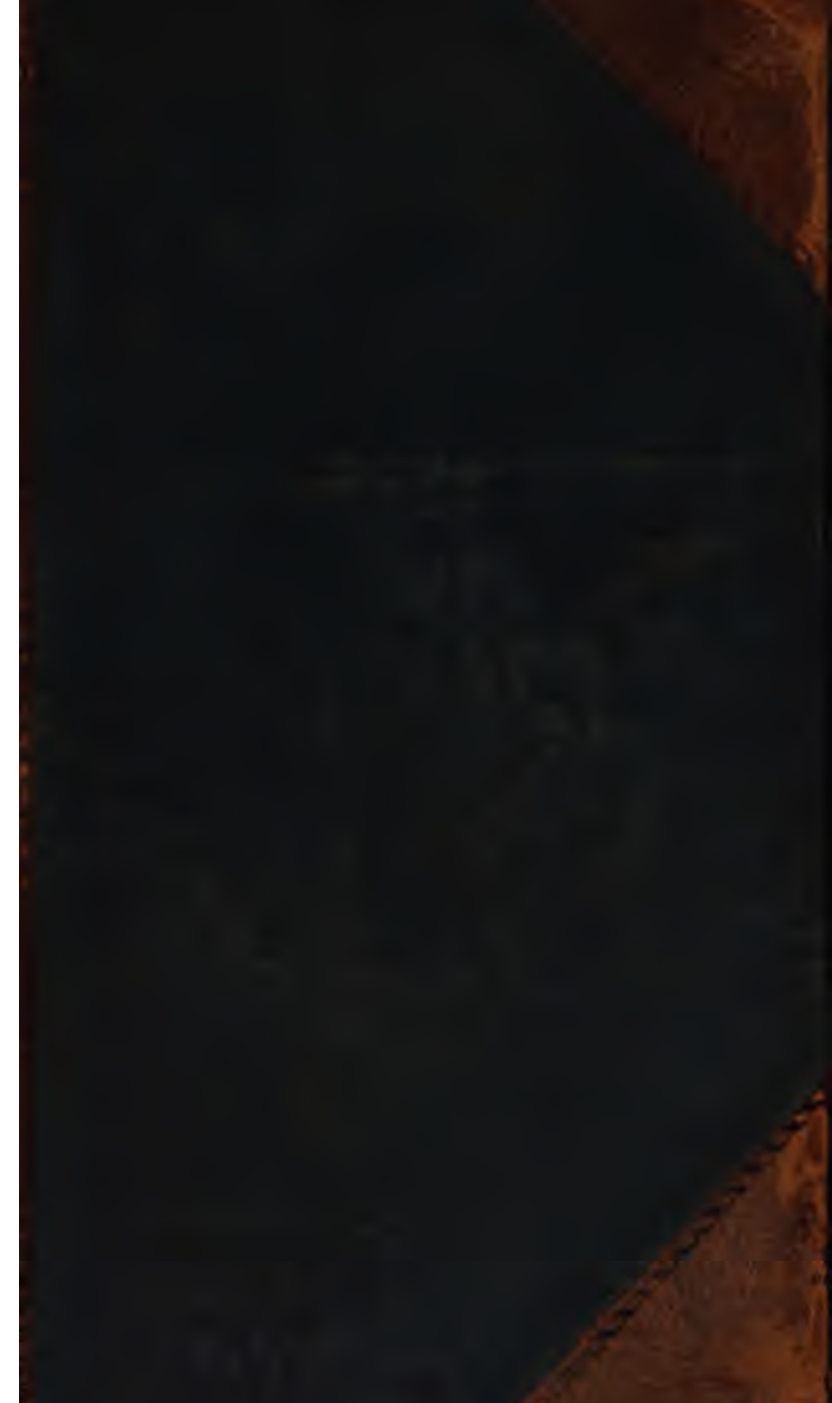
Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

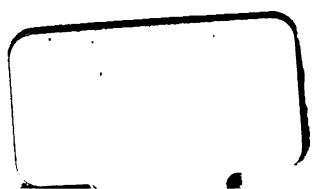
We also ask that you:

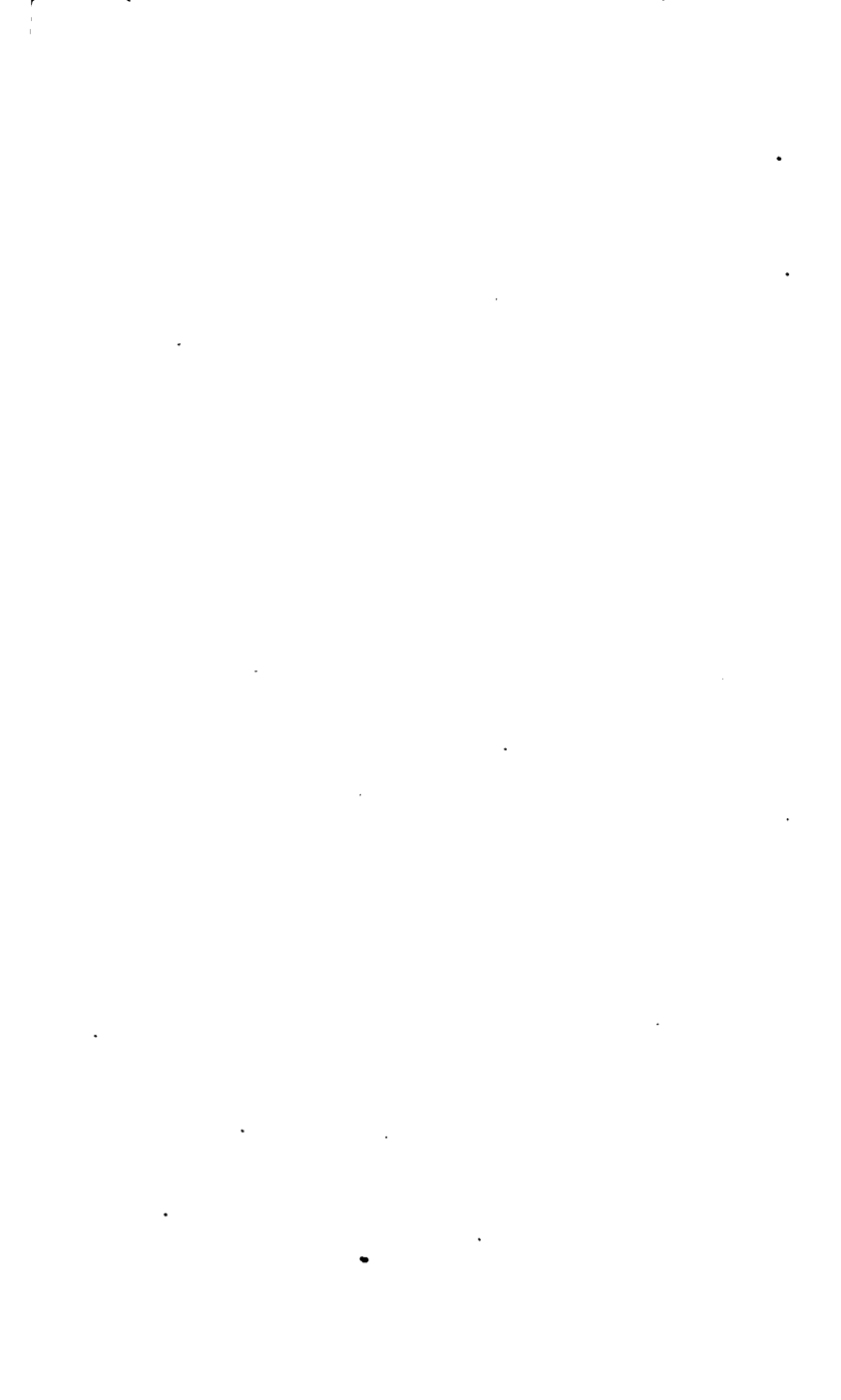
- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>

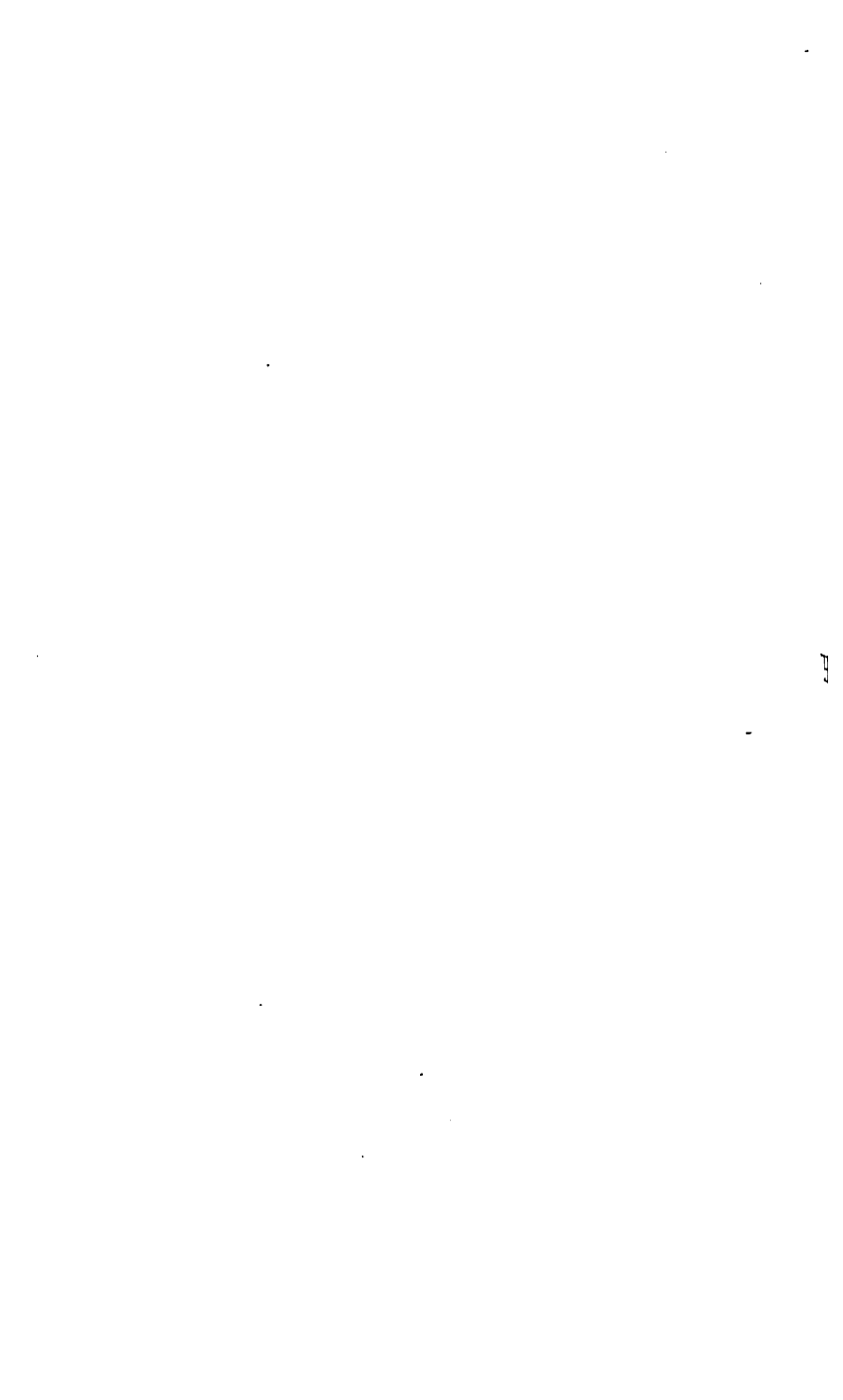






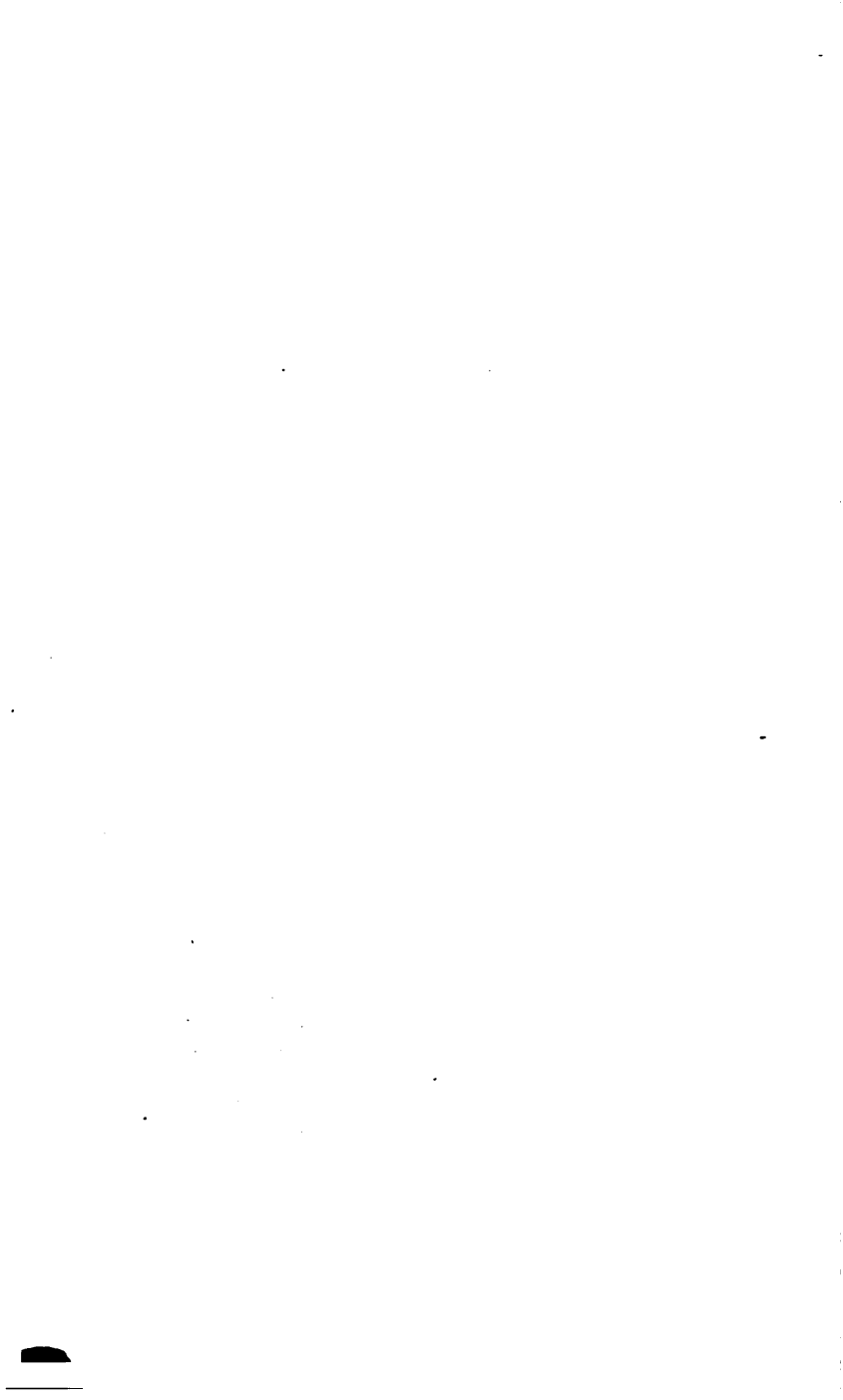






THE H— FAMILY,

ETC. ETC.



THE H— FAMILY,

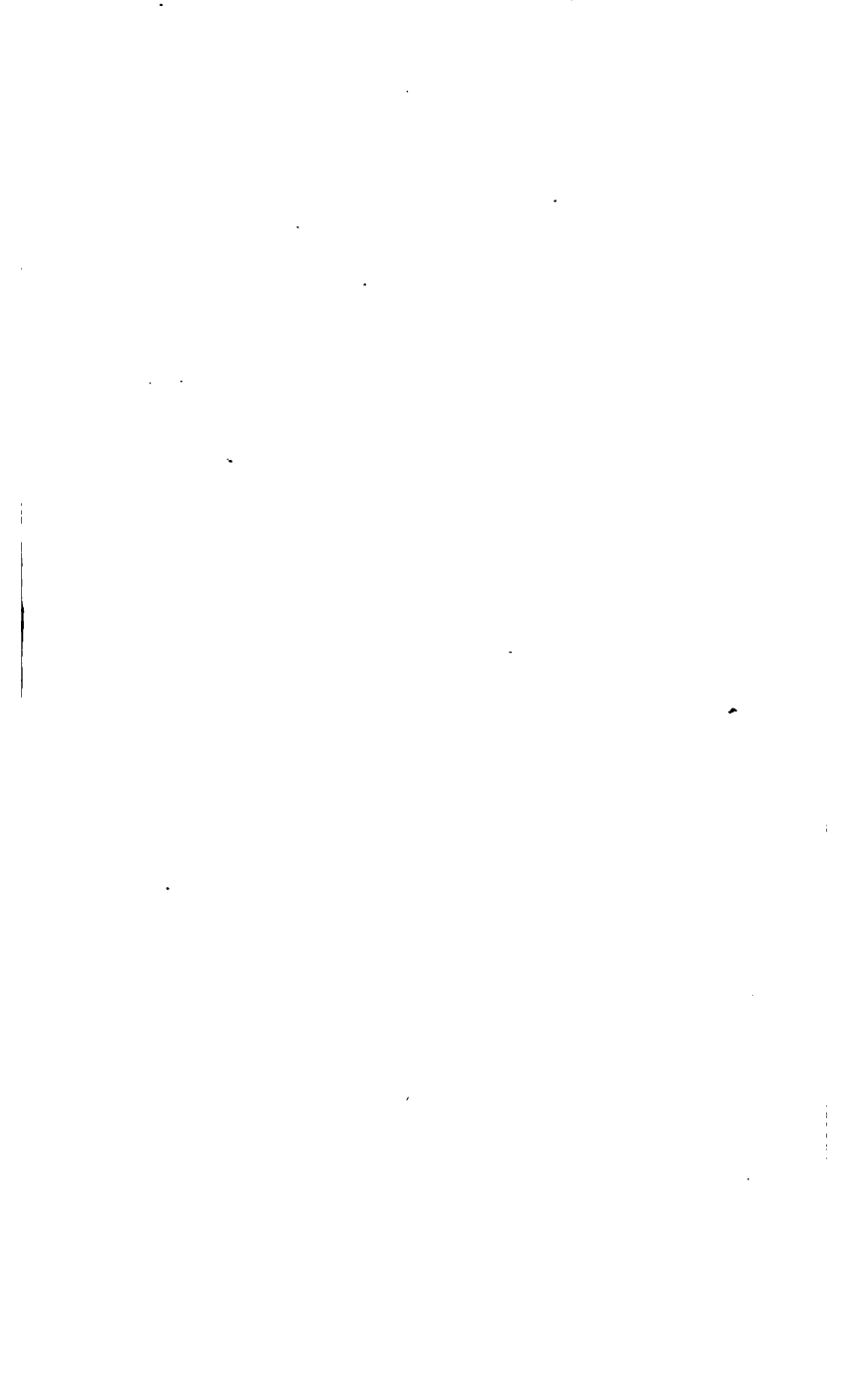
ETC. ETC.

NOTICE.

The Publishers of this work beg to state that it is private property, protected by the late Copyright Act, 5 & 6 Victoria, c. 45. They beg also to state that any person having in his possession, within the United Kingdom, for sale or hire, one or more copies printed abroad of any English work protected by the Act referred to, is liable to a penalty, which, in cases affecting their interests, they intend to enforce.

The Public are further informed that the Act 5 & 6 Victoria, c. 47, s. 24, prohibits the importation of all works printed in Foreign countries, of which the Copyright is not expired. Even single copies, though for the especial use of the importers and marked with their names, are excluded, and the Customs officers in the different ports are strictly enjoined to carry this regulation into effect.

N. B.—The above regulations are in force in all British colonies and dependencies, as well as in the United Kingdom.





Er mycket förbunden
Friedrika Bremer

THE
H— FAMILY:
TRÄLINNAN; AXEL AND ANNA;
AND OTHER TALES.

BY
FREDRIKA BREMER.

TRANSLATED
BY MARY HOWITT.

IN TWO VOLUMES.—VOL. I.

LONDON:
LONGMAN, BROWN, GREEN, AND LONGMANS,
PATERNOSTER-ROW.

1844.



LONDON:
PRINTED BY MANNING AND MASON,
IVY LANE, ST. PAUL'S.

PREFACE.

By the kindness of Miss Bremer I am enabled to present to the reader, with these volumes, the first and only authentic portrait of her which has ever appeared. Till within these few months no portrait of Miss Bremer had been painted, though a German publisher had prefixed one to an edition of *Nina*; which was, as Miss Bremer herself designates it—a *Galenskap*, or in plain English—a hoax. The portrait here given is from an admirable painting just completed by Captain Södermark, the first portrait painter of Sweden, and has been sent to me by Miss Bremer expressly for this work.

These two volumes complete the published works of Miss Bremer. The introduction of these writings

to the British public has been a great pleasure to me; and I am sure that they have not only strengthened many a heart in the fulfilment of daily duties, but have caused the path of household life to be strewn with the roses of love and kindness.

We all owe thanks and gratitude to Fredrika Bremer; and whilst I shall endeavour, through the favour of the Public, to perfect still more and more these my translations, I now bid her, for the present, an affectionate farewell.

M. H.

THE GRANGE, UPPER CLAPTON,
May 5, 1844.

THE H— FAMILY.



THE H— FAMILY.

PART I.

ARRIVAL.—TEA.—PORTRAITS.

TOWARDS the end of February 1829, I found myself one evening at the custom-house, waiting for the compulsory visit of the officer, after which I could enter the capital of Sweden. It was during a terrible storm, and I was sitting in a small open sledge, frozen, weary, and sleepy, and consequently, as thy compassionate soul may think, my affectionate young reader, not exactly in an enviable condition.

My poor little horse, which had a cold, coughed and sneezed. The fellow who drove me, crossed his arms over his body to warm himself. The tempest howled, and the snow whirled around us. I closed my eyes and waited, as I have often done, and have always found to be best amid all snow-storms, as well within as out of the house, which one is not lucky

enough to be able to escape. At length I heard slow steps advancing over the crackling snow. The inspector arrived with his lantern in his hand. He had a red nose, and looked unhappy. I held in my hand a bank-note, and wished to slip it into his, in order therewith to purchase for myself rest and an uninterrupted progress. He withdrew his hand. "It is not necessary," said he dryly, but courteously. "I shall not give you much trouble," continued he, as he began to lift out my travelling bags and to disarrange my bundles and handboxes. I found myself, not without vexation, compelled to alight. Out of humour, and with a secret, mischievous pleasure, I dropped again my bank-note into my reticule, and thought, "Well, then, he shall not get anything for his trouble."

In the mean time my social driver began a conversation with him.

"It is dreadfully bad weather this evening, dear sir!"

"Yes."

"I think you would have found it a deal merrier to have been sitting in a warm room, and drinking a drop, instead of freezing your fingers with stopping us here, for which nobody thanks you."

No answer.

"I would give something now to be sitting with my old folks in the warm chimney corner, and eating my Sunday groats, that would taste well, sir."

"Yes, yes!"

"Are you married?"

"Yes."

"Have you children?"

"Yes."

"And how many then?"

"Four." And a deep sigh followed this answer.

"Four? Nay, then, you have mouths enough to fill. Aha! Now you think you have found out something contraband. Cheese, dear sir; cheese, you see. Yes, your mouth may well water. I'd wager that you would rather bite into it than into the moon. Nay, do you not see that that is nothing but a butter tub? Must you of necessity dip your fingers into the brine?" etc. etc.

After the inspector had convinced himself that only a prodigious quantity of cheeses, loaves, and gingerbread, made up for the most part the lading of the sledge, he arranged all again in the most exact order, gave me his hand to assist me into the sledge, and carefully wrapped the furs around me. My displeasure had in the mean time altogether vanished. "It is," thought I, "the duty of poor inspectors to be the plague and torment of travellers, and this one has been mine in the politest way in the world." And whilst he continued to replace every thing conscientiously and carefully, arose in my soul all kind of representations which mollified me yet more. The red frosted nose, the dejected look, the stiff fingers, the

four children, the snowy weather, the dark dismal evening; all these arose within me like shadows in a camera obscura, and softened my heart. I felt again after the bank-note; I thought about a loaf and a cheese as a supper for the poor children; but whilst I felt, whilst I thought, the inspector opened the bar, took off his hat politely, and I drove hastily through the barrier, wishing to call out "Halt!" but without doing so. With a heavy heart, and with the uncomfortable feeling as if I had lost something valuable on the way, I drove through the city, and saw in the white whirling snow-flakes before me, as if in a transparency, the frosted red nose, and the dejected countenance, upon which I could so easily, at least for a moment, have called up a glad expression.

How many opportunities for doing good, in great or in small degree, are lost through indecision! Whilst we are asking ourselves, Shall I, or shall I not? the moment is passed, and the flower of joy which we might have given is withered, and often can no more be revived by tears of repentance.

Thus thought I sadly as my sledge slowly moved through the deep snow-slush of the streets, and often sank down into a kennel, out of which it was raised with difficulty. The wind had blown out the lights in the lanterns, and the streets were scarcely lighted at all, except by the lamps in the shops. Here I saw a gentleman who had almost lost his cloak, and whilst he wrapped it tighter around him, the wind blew his

hat off; there a lady, who, holding with one hand an umbrella, with the other her pelisse, went along blindly but courageously, and drove right upon a fruitstall, whose sharp-nosed proprietor bid her with a shrill voice to look better about her.

Here howled a dog; there swore a fellow who had driven his cart against another; a little lad went whistling gaily amid the snow-storm and the hurly-burly, which did not trouble his calm, childish mind. Ever and anon sped a covered sledge with lighted lamps, comet-like, on its beaming path, and driving aside both people and animals. This was all which I on this evening saw and heard of the great, magnificent capital. In order to enliven myself, I began to think about the amiable family in whose bosom I should soon find myself, on the glad occasion which took me there, with other cheerful, light, and soul-warming things which I could bring together in my memory. At length my sledge stopped. My driver exclaimed, "Now we are there!" and I said to myself enraptured, "Now then I am here!" and I soon heard around me many voices, which, in various but in joyful tones, exclaimed, "Good day!" "Good day!" "Good evening!" "Welcome! welcome!" I, my loaves, cheeses, gingerbread, we were all heartily welcome, and installed in an excellent and warm room.

Half an hour later, I sate in the handsome and well-lighted drawing-room, where Colonel H—— and

his family were assembled. It was tea-time; and from the boiling teakettle ascended a curling cloud of steam, which floated above the glittering teacups and the baskets up-heaped with cakes, rusks, and rye-loaves, which covered the ample tea-table. Tele-machus, as he came out of Tartarus into the Elysian Fields, could not have felt a greater contentment than I, arrived from my snow-stormy journey, in the friendly haven of the tea-table. The gay, pleasant beings who moved around me; the excellent apartment; the lights, which in certain moments no little contribute to making the soul light; the enlivening, warming draught which I was enjoying; all was excellently animating, inspiriting, all was — ah! wouldst thou believe it, my reader! that the frosted nose there at the barrier, in the midst of my pleasurable sensations set itself on the edge of my tea-cup, and embittered to me its nectar? Yes, yes, but it did so; and I think that I should have been less shocked to have seen my own double. In order to regain my perfect peace, said I to myself, “To-morrow I will rectify my inattention; to-morrow!” and pacifying myself with my resolution for the morrow, I now seated myself, according to my way, silently in a corner of the room, knitting my stocking, sipping now and then from the teacup, which stood upon a little table beside me, and noticing unobservedly the family picture before me. Colonel H—— sate in a corner of the sofa, and laid Patience, the *blockade de*

Copenhagen, I fancy. He was tall and strong-built, but thin, and had a sickly appearance. His features were noble, and from his deeply sunken eyes beamed forth a penetrating but quiet glance, for the most part full of an almost divine goodness, especially when it was riveted upon his children. He spoke seldom, never made speeches, but his words, uttered slowly and with a certain calm strength, had generally the effect of an oracle. Seriousness and mildness governed his whole being. He carried himself uncommonly upright; and I have always imagined that this was less the result of his military bearing than of his inflexible honesty, his firm integrity, which were the groundwork of his character, and were mirrored in his exterior.

He did not mingle himself in the conversation which, this evening, was carried on with much animation among his children; but yet, now and then, let fall dryly witty observations, which, accompanied by an expression of countenance so archly comic, and yet at the same time so full of conciliating goodness towards those to whom they referred, that these felt both embarrassment and pleasure.

His wife ("her Honour," as I from old custom mostly call her,)—her Honour sate in the other corner of the sofa, and netted, but without particularly attending to her work. She seemed not to have been handsome even in her younger years, but had, especially when she spoke, something kind, lively, and in-

teresting, which it was a pleasure to see. There was something tender, something restless in her manner, and especially in her eyes. One read there that she incessantly bore upon her heart that long, unending promemoria of thoughts and cares which, for a wife, mother, and housekeeper, begin with husband and child, go through all the concerns, all the least branches of home and domestic management, and never once come to an end; like the atoms of dust, which must be blown away, and which yet always fall again.

Her Honour's tender and restless glances dwelt this evening most frequently upon Emilia, the eldest daughter, with an expression both of pleasure and pain. An affectionate smile floated upon her lips, and tears glittered on her eyelids; but as in the smiles, so in the tears, beamed the warm and heart-felt mother's love.

Emilia seemed not to observe her mother's glances, for she served tea quite calmly, with white and beautiful hands, whilst by a grave dignified mien she endeavoured to put an end to the tricks of her brother Carl, who introduced into the tea-service all that disorder which, as he asserted, existed in his sweet sister's own heart. She was of middle size, a stiff figure, but well-grown. Blond, fair, but without regular beauty of feature, her agreeable countenance was particularly attractive, from the expression of purity, kindness, and integrity which rested upon

it. She seemed to have inherited her father's quiet character, united, at the same time, to greater gaiety, for she laughed frequently, spite of her assumed dignity, and that so heartily, that she seduced all the rest to join her.

It is becoming to very few people to laugh; one sees too many persons who during this expression of mirth place the handkerchief before the face, to conceal the disagreeableness which is occasioned by the puckered-up eyes, the movements of the stretched-out mouth, etc. etc. Emilia, had it been necessary for her to resort to this measure of prudence, would have scorned it,—she was, even in the least things, all too simple and upright to practise a single coquettish manœuvre. She had not, however, in this case, any necessity, for her laugh was infinitely charming, as well because it was so naïve and so heartfelt, as that it displayed the loveliest white teeth, that adorned a sweet and fresh mouth; yet of this she never thought.

If I had been a young fellow, I should have thought, the moment I saw Emilia, "Behold there my wife!" (N.B.—If she will.)

But yet Emilia was not in every thing as she seemed, or rather, she had a good deal of that inconsequence which may be interwoven and united even with the noblest human natures, even as there are knots in the finest and noblest webs.

Besides all this, Emilia was no longer in her first

youth; and thou, my young sixteen-year-old reader, will perhaps consider her very, very old. "How old was she, then?" askest thou, perhaps. She had just passed her six-and-twentieth year. "Uh! that is horrible! she was indeed an old, old person!" Not so horrible—not so old, my rosebud. She was merely a rose in its full bloom, and so thought also Mr.——; but of this hereafter.

I pity the painter to whom the difficult task should be given of painting Julie's portrait, for she is the *perpetuum mobile* in more than one sense. Now she played tricks on her brother, who never left a debt of this kind unpaid; now employed herself in another way with her sisters. Sometimes she snuffed the candles, and snuffed them out, in order to have the pleasure of relighting them; she arranges or disarranges the ribbons of her mother's negligée, and sneaks often behind the Colonel, lays her arm around his neck, and kisses his forehead; his exclamation, "Let me alone, girl," terrifying her by no means from soon coming again.

A charming little head, around which rich plaits of fair hair formed a crown, blue lively eyes, dark eyelashes and eyebrows, a well-shaped nose with a little high-bred curve, a somewhat large but handsome mouth, a small delicate figure, small hands, small feet, more willing to dance than to walk—see there Julie, eighteen years of age.

Brother Carl—ah, I beg pardon—Cornet Carl, was

three ells high, well grown, easy in his movements— thanks to nature, gymnastics, and Julie. He had a many peculiar ideas, as steadfast as the hills, three of which are his favourite ideas: Firstly, that the Swedish people are the first and most superior people in Europe. Against this, none of his family contend. Secondly, he never should fall in love, because he was twenty years of age without ever having felt his heart beat, whilst many of his more fortunate companions had gone crazy out of pure love. “It will come in time,” said the Colonel. Julie said he would presently be over head and ears in love. Emilia sighed, and prayed that God might defend him. Thirdly, the Cornet fancied that he was so ugly that he should even frighten horses. Julie said that this peculiarity was very fortunate for him in case of an attack of the enemy’s cavalry; but she, as well as her sisters and many others, regarded the open, honest, manly expression of her brother’s countenance as a full compensation for any lack of beauty in feature. She often repeated to him with a secret little joy how horribly ugly and unbearable she found Mr. P., with the handsome Apollo-head without expression and life. Cornet Carl loved his sisters tenderly, and rendered them all the service which lay in his power, more especially that of trying their patience.

Near to her father sate the youngest of the daughters, the seventeen-year-old Helena. At the first glance one cast upon her, one was ready to pity

her; at the next, to wish her happiness. She was plain and humpbacked, but intellect and cheerfulness beamed from her uncommonly bright eyes. She seemed to possess that steadfastness and repose of character, that clearness of mind, that stability and cheerfulness, which give a more sure guarantee for the repose and happiness of life than all those showy outward attractions which are worshipped and loved by the world. She was working zealously at a dress of white silk, and now looked up from her work to nod kindly and significantly at Emilia, or to raise to her father a glance of reverential, almost adoring tenderness.

One might almost fancy that the Colonel, most of all his children, loved this one whom nature seemed so hardly to have used, for often when Helena would lay her head upon her father's shoulder, and raise to him her affectionate glance, he would bend himself down to her, and kiss her forehead with an expression of tenderness which cannot be described. On the other side of the Colonel sate a young lady, the daughter of a relative. One might have taken her for an antique statue; so beautiful, so marble-white, so immoveable was she. More beautiful dark eyes than hers were never seen; but ah! she certainly was to be pitied. Those beautiful eyes never more could behold the light of day. She had been blind from cataract for four years. That which ruled in her soul, whether storm or shine, it was difficult to see; its mirror was

darkened, and something proud, cold, and almost half-dead, lay in her exterior, and repelled all questioning glances. It seemed to me as if she had said, with a feeling of proud despair, in the hour when fate announced to her "Thou shalt no more see light,"—said with a solemn oath, "No one shall see my suffering!"

Still one other little group must come forth in my picture; namely, that which in the back-ground of the room consisted of Magister* Nup, distinguished for his good-nature, learning, silence, shortsightedness, his turned-up nose, and his absence of mind; together with his pupils, the little Axel and the little Claes, the youngest sons of the Colonel, remarkable for their especial good condition and plumpness; for which reason they had in the family the surname of "the Dumplings."

The Magister, spite of his wig having taken fire three times, hung now with his nose over his book in the nearest possible proximity to the light. The Dumplings ate rusks and played at the famished fox, and waited for the fourth illumination of the Magister's head; the approach of which they announced to each other every now and then, by friendly elbow jogs, and "See now! Wait now! Now it comes!"

Now I should like inexpressibly to know whether any of my amiable young readers, either out of a great politeness or a little curiosity, would wish to

* Master of Arts.

have any nearer description of the person who sits in a corner of the room, stock still, knitting her stocking, sipping now and then from her cup of tea, and making her remarks on the company.

In order that I may not leave any wish of my readers unfulfilled, I will also give a sketch of her. She belongs to that class of persons of whose existence a simple member of the sisterhood has thus expressed herself: "Sometimes it is as if one were everywhere, sometimes again it is as if one were nowhere." This strange existence belongs in general to persons who, without belonging to families, are received into them, for sociality, for help, for counsel and action, in pleasure and in need. I will, in a few words, give a description of such a person in general; and in order that she may not remain without any part in our titled social circle, I will bestow on her the title of "House Counsellor." Her sphere of action is extensive, and is of the following nature. She may have her thoughts, her hand, her nose, in every thing, and foremost in every thing—but it must not be observed. Is the gentleman of the house in a bad humour? Then is she pushed forward either in the capacity of a lightning-conductor or else a pair of bellows, whose property it is to blow away the tempest. Has the lady the vapours? Then her presence is as necessary as the bottle of eau de Cologne. Have the daughters vexation? Then she is there to share it. Have they little wishes, plans, projects? Then

she is the speaking-trumpet through which they speak to deaf ears. If the children cry, then they send for her to pacify them. Will they not sleep? She must tell them stories. Is anybody ill? She watches. She executes commissions for the whole family, and good counsel must she have on all occasions, ready for everybody. Does grand company come? Is the house put in gala-array then? She vanishes; people know not where she is, no more than they know where the smoke which ascended up the chimney is gone; but the works of her invisible presence cease not to betray her. One sees not upon the festal board the pan in which the cream was boiled; this must stand quietly upon the kitchen hearth; and in like manner is it the lot of the House Counsellor to prepare the useful and the agreeable, but to renounce the honour. If she can do this with stoical patience and resignation, then is her existence often as interesting for herself as it is important in the family circle. It is true that she must be humble and quiet, go softly through doors, must move with less noise than a fly, and above all things, not like this, settle upon people's noses; must yawn as seldom as her human nature will allow. But on the contrary, she may use eyes and ears in freedom, although with prudence, and she has excellent opportunities to derive benefit therefrom. Contrary to what is required in the physical world, there is in the moral world no place so useful for an observatory as the lowly one

unobserved by all eyes; and consequently, the House Counsellor possesses the most advantageous position for directing around the family hemisphere her searching telescope. Every movement, every spot upon the heart's planet, becomes visible by degrees to her; the smallest wandering comet she follows upon its path; she sees the eclipses come and go; and whilst she observes the phenomena, the growing feelings and thoughts in the human soul, more countless than the stars of heaven, she learns day after day to comprehend and interpret one point after another of the Creator's great and admirable hieroglyphics. One sees, therefore, that she by degrees must acquire a good deal of that precious, ever-applicable gold, which is called knowledge of mankind; and the hope smiles upon her, that she, in the future, when spectacles adorn her nose and silver hair her aged brow, shall, as an oracle, talk to listening youth of that which she *knows*, and which they now do not *anticipate*.

So much for the personality of the House Counsellor in general. A few words now on that one who, in the family of Colonel H——, must fill this character to a certain extent. To a certain extent I say, because, thank God, she is regarded there more as a friend, and has therefore not the post of the prompter, nor stands behind the scenes; but steps often forth upon the stage, and says her word just as freely and unreservedly as any of the other actors.

The first word which her childish lips stammered

forth after her twelvemonth's sojourn upon this lower earth, was "Moon." Eight years after this, she wrote her verses "To the Moon;" and the morning of a life which since then developed itself so dryly and prosaically, was a lovely poetical moonlight dream. Many a sonnet, many an ode, was consecrated by her pen to all the most attractive objects of nature, whilst the rich youthful days in which the heart beat so high, in which the feelings swelled like a spring flood, and in which the abundant well of tears flowed from so sweet a pain,—but in all which she sung, wrote, or dreamed, there was always something of moonshine.

The parents shook their wise heads. "Girl, if thou writest verses, thou wilt never learn to make soup; thou wilt let the sauce burn. Thou must think betimes that thou must learn to maintain thyself; must be able to spin thy thread and bake thy bread. One cannot satisfy oneself with moonshine." But the girl wrote her verses, and boiled the soup, and did not burn the sauce; turned round her spinning-wheel, baked her bread; but forgot not her childhood's friend, the gentle moon. Afterwards, when its friendly light shone upon the grave of her parents, she wrote no verses in their honour, but looked up with a beseeching glance to the mild heavenly countenance, as to a comforter, whose light should enliven and guide the fatherless and motherless upon her solitary way. But ah! the fatherless and the motherless might have nearly famished in the beloved moonlight, had not

another light, and other beams, brought to her salvation. This came from the hearth of a count's kitchen. She succeeded in the preparation of a wine-jelly, and this made her fortune.

People had discovered in her the talent of making excellent wine jelly; people became by degrees aware that she also possessed some other similar invaluable gifts. One young lady with chapped lips found herself greatly benefited by her lip-salve; one old gentleman found in her, to his great comfort, a never-weary listener to the histories of his forty-nine ailments. The tender mother of four little wonderfully gifted children, heard with deep emotion from their rosy lips, of her uncommon ability in rhyming together father and rather, pleasure and treasure, little and brittle, birth-day and mirth-day, etc. etc. A sleepy honourable lady was all at once wide awake when this same talented person prophesied by the cards that she would very soon receive a present; nine persons celebrated within a short time her excellent advice for toothach, pain in the chest, and for colds in the head; and at a bridal and a funeral, people discovered in her a wonderful faculty for arranging all, from "her grace's" head-dress down to the dish of confectionery, from the myrtle wreath in the locks of the bride down to the bread and butter on the table with the brandy; and at the solemn marriage festival, as well as the decking of the last resting-place of the dead bride, as well as the entertainment of those who,

even on mournful occasions, never forget that people must eat to live.

By the industrious use of these talents, and by the bringing forth of others of a similar kind, she rose by degrees, step by step, to the rank of a House Counsellor. The writing of verses she had almost entirely forgotten, excepting that now and then some meagre lines were forced out from duty.

Upon the moon she looks but seldom, unless to observe when it is new moon or waning; and yet its beams are perhaps the only friends which will visit her lonely grave. But here is not now the question about writing elegies. Will anybody now know anything more about the prosaic friend of the moon? Her age? That is somewhere between twenty and forty years. Her appearance? As most people's is; although, perhaps, most people might be quite offended if they were thought to have any resemblance to her. Her name? Ah! your most obedient servant,

CHRISTINA BEATA HVAR DAGSLAG.

JULIE'S LETTER.—HELENA.—THE BLIND.—EMILIA.—
THE BRIDEGROOMS.

I have already said that it was a happy occasion which was the cause of my journey to the capital; and I should therefore give the best account of it if I laid before the eyes of my young readers the letter which I a short time before received, in my solitude in the country, from Julie H——.

My best Beata,

Lay aside thy eternal knitting when thou seest these lines; snuff thy long-wicked candle. (It is, is it not, in the evening that the post comes to R——?) Bolt thy door, so that, without any fear of being disturbed, thou canst sit in peace and comfort on thy sofa, and with the befitting attention read the great, remarkable news I have to announce to thee. I can see from here how horribly curious thou art—how thy eyes open—and now I will tell thee—a tale!

There was once upon a time a man—who was neither king nor prince, but who yet deserved to be these. He had a daughter; and although fate had

not permitted her to be born a princess, yet there assembled themselves half a score of gracious fairies around the little one's cradle, merely out of pure esteem and kindness to her father. They gave to her beauty, understanding, grace, talents, a noble heart, good temper, patience, in one word, all which can be given to make a woman charming; and in order to complete the measure of good gifts, stepped forth, last of all, the fairy Prudence, speaking thus, in carefully selected words: "For the sake of her temporal and eternal welfare, shall she be in the highest degree prudent and circumspect, nay, even difficult, in the choice of a husband!" "Well said; wisely said!" exclaimed all the lady-fairies, amid deep sighs.

The richly-gifted one grew up, was as amiable as any one might reasonably expect, and lovers soon knocked early and late in the day, with sighs and prayers, upon the door of her heart. But ah! for the most of them it remained immoveably bolted; and if it were, only for a moment, opened a very little to any one, it was closed again in the next minute, and fastened with double bolts. Fortunately, the time of the Princess Turandot was long passed; and in Sweden, where the lovely Elimia dwelt, the air must have been of a much cooler kind than that of the land where Prince Calaf sighed—for one never heard of the rejected lovers putting an end to their days; one saw them scarcely lose their appetite; yes, one even hears of some who (would any

one believe it?) choose a beloved with as much indifference as one chooses a stocking.

The first who announced himself as pretendent to the heart of the beautiful Elimia was found by her to be too sentimental, because he was horrified at the crime of killing a gnat, and sighed over the innocent chickens which figured as roast upon the dinner-table, and besides were the favourite dish of his beloved. United to him, she feared being in danger of being starved to death on pure blanc-mange and vegetables. The second did not avoid treading upon emmets, loved fishing and hunting, and looked as if he were cruel and hard-hearted; rather, much rather, would she marry a hare than a hunter! A hare came, shy in look, trembling in his knees, stammering forth his sighs, his wishes, and his doubts. "Poor little thing," was the answer, "go and hide thyself, thou wilt otherwise be the prey of the first wild beast which meets thee in his path!" The hare hopped away. The lion-man stepped forth with proud lover-word. Now the beauty was in great fear of being eaten up, and she hid herself till the mighty one was gone past. This was the fourth. The fifth, merry and gay, was considered to be trifling; the sixth was believed to have an inclination for gambling; the seventh, in consequence of two or three pimples on his nose, to be inclined to strong liquors; the eighth looked as if he could be ill-tempered; the ninth seemed to be an egotist; the tenth said in every sen-

tence, ‘the devil fetch me!’—it would not be well to venture forth into life with him. The eleventh looked too much upon his hands and feet, and was therefore a fool. The twelfth came. He was good, noble, manly, handsome; he seemed to love honestly; he talked well; people were in great perplexity what faults they should find in him. He seemed to love truly, but perhaps only seemed; or if he loved, perhaps it was rather the attractive, perishable body than the immortal soul.—God help us, what heavy sin! If it continued so then——but the lover swore that it was the soul, precisely the soul itself which he adored, and in that fortunate moment he so powerfully assailed the already yielding heart, that in the end her trembling lips moved themselves in such a way that he saw they must open the door through which the capitulating YES must proceed. He took this all for settled, regarded the word as said, fell upon his knees, kissed her hand and mouth, and lovely Elimia, ready to fall down with astonishment and confusion, found herself, she did not know how, betrothed.

The marriage was fixed by her father and her bridegroom for a short time afterwards. Elimia did not say yes to that, but neither did she say no; and her bridegroom thought “silence gives consent.” As the time went on, the lovely Elimia counted. “Now there are only fourteen, now only twelve; Gracious Heaven! now only ten; and Lord God! now only eight days remaining!” Now a great anguish and

horror overcame her soul. Spectral and ghostly shapes, numerous as the locusts which overwhelmed Egypt, took possession of her hitherto so bright and calm spirit, and called forth there uneasiness and darkness. Now she wished to delay, not to say break off, her engagement with the noble Almanzor; who certainly, said she, had a many more faults than people believed; and one uncommonly great one, that of being so well able to hide them. Perfection is not the lot of human nature; and they who seem to be most free from faults, are perhaps, in fact, the least so. Besides which, she fancied that their characters did not at all harmonise; further, he was too young, but she too old; and so on; and the sum and end of all was, that she should be unhappy for the whole of her lifetime.

A very good friend of Elimia had the greatest desire in the world to break the neck of the fairy Prudentia, whose unlucky gifts caused Elimia to thrust from her the happiness which awaited her in her union with a husband who seemed altogether made for her, and devoted to her in the tenderest manner.

Now I see how impatient thou art, Beata, and askest what is the sum and substance of all this, and what purpose it serves? All this, my good friend, will serve, first and foremost, as a little whet to the appetite before dinner, because I have to shew thee what wonderful magic power is suddenly bestowed upon the little Julie; for with a few strokes of my

pen I change all my above-mentioned personages; make *once* into *now*, and the tale into truth.

Almanzor then becomes the young, amiable Algeron S——; and his bride, lovely Elimia, my sister Emilia H——, who so bitterly repents of the “yes” which she has given. The fairy Prudentia again must undergo a great change; and is nothing else but the fickleness and irresolution which have so strong a power over Emilia’s heart that it now questions whether she is determined to enter the holy condition of matrimony. If one do not now from all sides push her onward, she will go, like the crabs, backwards. Now this Emilia, whom I so inwardly love, and who often makes me so impatient, sits in the corner of the sofa opposite to me; is pale and restless; thinks upon her wedding-day—and has the vapours! Must one laugh about it or cry? I do both, and make Emilia do the same.

The only thing that one can now do, to prevent poor Emilia from pondering and beating her brains, troubling and distressing herself for nothing, is to allow every thing to go topsy-turvy, with bustle and stir around her, till the wedding-day—and turn her head, if possible. I know that papa would never allow any of us to break a given promise. Emilia knows this too; and I fancy that it is precisely this which makes her so dejected. And yet she loves Algernon; yes, admires him at times; but she would, for all that, if she dared, give him now a refusal. Tell

me how can one explain this—how does it hang together? Still, however, when her fate is once inevitably determined, I know that that all will be well; and the drollery of the affair is, that Emilia thinks so too. In the mean time, in the next week all will be in order. On Sunday, that is to-morrow week, is the horrible wedding-day. Emilia will be married at home, and only a few acquaintance will be invited. Emilia wishes it to be so, and people gratify her now in every thing which she desires, if it be only reasonable. She says people do so with all poor sacrifices. Comical idea! Thou seest, best Beata, how necessary thy presence here is for us all. In truth, we need in every respect thy council and thy aid. Pack up, therefore, thy things immediately, and journey here as quickly as thou canst.

On Monday Algernon comes to Stockholm, and with him my bridegroom also. I have not been so hard to please, so anxious as Emilia, and yet have not chosen badly. My Arvid is an Adonis, and has a heart which is worth gold. Papa thinks much of him, and that is the most important thing. My good, my revered, my beloved papa! I had so firmly resolved never to leave him and mamma—I cannot imagine how I ever determined to be a bride; but my Arvid was irresistible. Papa, however, has Helena, who never will marry, and Helena is worth three such Julies as I am. Papa was at first much against my marriage, and had so many objections that it was

nearly given up altogether ; but I threw myself upon my knees and wept, and Arvid's father (the friend of papa's youth) made such beautiful speeches, and Arvid himself looked so cast down, that papa in the end was softened, and said, " Nay, they may then have one another ! And Arvid and I exulted like two larks. Thou wilt see him ; he has a dark moustache, and imperial large blue eyes, the loveliest—but thou wilt see—thou wilt see ! He has the most beautiful *son de voix* in the world, and Emilia may say what she will, but it is actually charming when he says, " The thousand fetch me !"

It sounds strange, perhaps, thou thinkest—but thou shalt see, thou shalt hear ! Come, come, and embrace, at the latest on the evening after to-morrow,

Thy friend,

JULIE H.

P.S.—Bring with thee, I pray, some of the beautiful loaves which thou knowest that papa and mamma think so much of ; some cheese for Carl and Helena, and a little gingerbread for me. Thou hast always a store of such. Emilia, poor Emilia, poor Emilia ! methinks, will have quite enough to swallow down her vapours. Thou canst not conceive how afraid I am that she may, out of pure disquiet and grief, be quite yellow or ugly when Algernon comes. Emilia, I fancy, almost wishes it in order to put his love to her immortal soul to the test. I fancy, actually, that

she would require him to love her just the same if she were changed into a mole! I am really troubled. Emilia is so changeable in her appearance, and is quite another person when she is anxious and uneasy than when she is calm and cheerful.

Once more farewell.

P.S.—Dost thou know who is to marry Emilia?—Professor L.; who looks so horribly grave, has a twisted foot, a red eye, and two warts upon his nose. He has lately received a living. Papa has much esteem and friendship for him. As far as I am concerned I should find no great pleasure in being married by a weak-eyed priest. But I am not to be married for a couple of years, or, perhaps, in the autumn, therefore it is not worth while thinking about it now.

I had nearly forgotten the innumerable greetings of the whole family to thee.

I immediately accepted Julie's invitation, and arrived, as has already been seen, one evening at the end of February at Colonel H's.

There remain yet a few words to be said on the occurrences of this evening, and I knit again to these the thread of my narrative. The blind girl, who had sate for a time silent and still, said at length with a kind of vehemence:

"I would sing." Helena rose up quickly, led her

to the piano, and sate down to accompany her. Helena inquired what she would sing, "*Ariadne à Naxos*," was the short determined answer. They began. In the beginning the voice of the singer was not pleasant to me; it was strong, deep, almost dejected; but the more attentively one listened, the more one paid regard to the feeling which spoke through it, and which it revealed with magical truth, the more one was enchanted; one shuddered involuntarily; one felt one's heart beat in sympathy with Ariadne when she, penetrated by an increasing anguish, seeks for her beloved, and takes the resolution to climb the rock in order that there she may the more easily be able to discover him. The accompaniment here expressing in a masterly manner her climbing, one seems to see how she hastened breathless and full of foreboding. At length she has neared the top, her eye is cast over the sea, and perceives the white, ever receding sail. The blind girl followed Ariadne with her whole soul, and one might have believed by the expansion of her eyes, that she saw something more than—mere darkness. Tears involuntarily filled all eyes as she, with a heart-rending expression of love and pain in voice and countenance, exclaimed with Ariadne, "*Theseus! Theseus!*" When her inspiration and our delight had reached the highest point, the Colonel suddenly rose up, went to the piano, took the singer by the hand, led her away without saying a single word, and placed her again upon the sofa, when he seated him-

self beside her. I remarked that she hastily withdrew her hand from his. She was deathly pale and much excited. No one except myself appeared to be astonished at this scene. They began an indifferent conversation, in which every one, excepting the blind girl, took part. In about an hour the Colonel said to her, "You need rest;" and with that arose and conducted her from the room, after she silently, but with a kind of solemnity, bowed her head in salutation of the remaining company. Just as he was about to leave the room, the Colonel called "Helena," and Helena followed them.

Soon after this I went up into my room to enjoy repose; but the image of the blind girl which incessantly floated before me, prevented me long from doing so. I heard her penetrating voice, saw her expressive countenance, and could not help endeavouring to guess the nature of the feelings which shook her soul.

I was not yet asleep as Emilia and Julie softly stole into their room, which lay next to mine. The door stood open, and I heard the half-aloud conversation of the two sisters. Julie said with some vexation, "You yawn, you sigh, and yet Algernon comes in the morning! Emilia, you have no more feeling than a paper-box."

EMILIA. How do you know but that this is out of sympathy with Algernon, who perhaps just now does the same?

JULIE. That does he not: that I am sure of. Much rather do I believe that he hardly knows on which foot he stands, out of impatient joy of soon seeing you.

EMILIA. Do you judge this from his last letter?

JULIE. That, indeed, was written in such haste. One is not always alike inclined for writing; perhaps he had a severe headache, or a bad cold in the head, or he had taken cold.

EMILIA. Whatever you will; but nothing can excuse the cold, unmeaning end of the letter.

JULIE. I assure you, Emilia, it stands there "with the tenderest devotion."

EMILIA. And I am certain that it stands there quite dry and cold, "with esteem and devotion remain," and so on; just so as people write to an indifferent person, "subscribed with esteem," and so on; for the meagre esteem must always remain where the warmer feelings are gone. Where is my night-cap? Ah, see there! Ho! ho! ho! ho! You, Julie, see every thing rose-coloured.

JULIE. I see that a lover must take care never to speak of esteem. But I am sure that Algernon never wrote that horrible word, using one warmer and heart-felt. Sweet Emilia, fetch his letter. You will there see that you have done him injustice.

EMILIA. On purpose to please you, I will fetch his letter. We shall then see that I am right.

JULIE. And we shall see that I am right.

Emilia fetched the letter. Both sisters approached the light with it. Julie would snuff the candle; and either by accident or intention, snuffed it out. For a moment all was as silent as it was dark, and then Emilia's hearty laughter was heard. Julie joined in; and I could not avoid making a trio with them. Tumbling over, and running against chairs and tables, the sisters at length found their beds, and cried, laughing to me, "Good-night, good-night!"

The day after my arrival was in the house the so-called "cleaning-day," a day which now and then enters into all well-ordered houses; and which may be likened to a tempestuous day in nature, after whose storms and rain-gushes all comes forth in renewed brightness, order, and freshness.

They scoured, aired, dusted, and swept in all corners. Her Honour, who would herself oversee every thing, went incessantly in and out through all the doors, and mostly left them all open, which occasioned a horrible draught. In order to preserve myself from earache and toothache, I fled from one room to another, and found at length in Helena's, up another flight of stairs, a haven free from storm. This little apartment seemed to me the most comfortable and most cheerful in the whole house. It had windows towards the sunny side; the walls were ornamented with pictures, which for the most part represented charming landscapes. Among these were distinguished two from Fahlcrantz, in which the pencil

of this great artist had conjured up the enchanting repose which a beautiful summer evening diffuses over nature, and which communicates itself so powerfully to the human heart. The eye which fixed itself attentively upon these pictures, expressed quickly something loving, pensive, and dreamy; and this was the surest guarantee for their truthful beauty.

The furniture of the room was handsome and convenient. A piano, a well-filled bookcase, and easel for painting, shewed that in this little circumscribed world there failed nothing of all that which can make the pleasures of the outer world dispensable, and which can occupy the passing hours of the day in the most agreeable manner.

Large, splendid geraniums stood in the windows, and awoke, by their fresh verdure, pleasant thoughts of spring, whilst they softened and broke up the beams of the sun, which on this day shone in all the brilliancy which they commonly possess in the keen winter frost. A beautiful carpet covered the floor, which seemed to be scattered over with flowers.

Helena was seated on the sofa, at her sewing. The New Testament lay before her on her work-table.

She received me with a smile expressive of the heart's peace and satisfaction. I placed myself near to her at my work, and felt myself particularly cheerful and happy of mood. We worked at Emilia's bridal-dress.

"You observe my room," said Helena the while,

smiling, whilst her eyes took the direction of mine. "Yes," replied I; "your sisters' rooms are handsome and excellent, but one must confess that they are not to be compared with this."

"It has been my father's will," said she, "that Helena should be the only spoiled child in the house." She continued, with tears in her eyes, "My good papa has wished that I should never miss the joys and pleasures which are the lot of my handsome, healthy sisters, and from which I am excluded by my suffering and my infirmity. Therefore he has taught me to enjoy that which is far richer, which a knowledge and practice of the fine arts offer to those who embrace them with a warm and open mind. He therefore formed and strengthened my understanding, by regular, and anything but superficial studies, which he himself directed. He has therefore collected in this little corner, where I pass the greater part of my life, so much which is charming and beautiful for the eye, for the feelings, and the thoughts. Yet, what is more than all this, is the heartfelt fatherly love with which he embraces and surrounds me; and this secures me from ever bitterly feeling the want of love, whose enjoyment nature has denied me. He has perfectly succeeded; and I have no other wish than that of living for him, for my mother, my family, and—my God."

We were silent for a moment, and I worshipped in my heart the father who so well understood how

to care for the happiness of her to whom he had given life. Helena continued. "When mamma is gone with my sisters to balls or into company, he passes his time for the most part with me. I read to him, play to him; and he permits me, out of indescribable goodness, to believe that I contribute essentially to the happiness of his life. That thought makes me happy. It is a beautiful, an enviable lot, to know that one is *something* to *him* who is a blessing to all who surround him."

"Oh!" thought I, and addressed in thought the fathers of families on the earth, "why are so few like this father? Kings of home, how much happiness could you not diffuse around you, how worshipped might you not be!"

We talked afterwards of Emilia.

"It is strange," said Helena, "that a person who generally is so calm, so clear in her judgments, so decided, so reasonable, in one word, should in this one point be so unlike herself. Determined to marry, because she regards a happy marriage as the most blessed condition on earth, Emilia has had the greatest possible difficulty to determine herself to it. Two of her young friends having most unhappily married has infused into her a sort of panic dread; and she fears so much being unhappy in her marriage, that she never would have the courage to be happy, if others did not act for her. She is now nearly half ill with anxiety, that her union is so near at hand

with Algernon S——, for whom she seems to have an actual devotion, and with whom we are all convinced that she will be perfectly happy. She has intervals of calm, and in such a one you saw her last evening. I fear that it will soon be over, and expect that with it we shall see her disquiet and irresolution increase in proportion as the deciding hour approaches, which, as I am persuaded, will perfectly put an end to it; for when once anything irrevocable is determined, Emilia submits herself, and seeks the best in every thing. It will be necessary that till the wedding-day we endeavour in every possible way to divert her, and prevent her from occupying herself with useless fancies. We have each one of us our particular part in the little comedy which we must act before and with our good sister. Papa means to make her walk industriously; mamma consults with her about every thing which now must be arranged before the wedding. Julie intends, in one way or another, never to leave her quiet. Brother Carl will often draw her into dispute about Napoleon, whom he places below Charles the Twelfth, which she cannot bear; and this is the only subject on which I have heard my quiet, good sister dispute with warmth. I, on the contrary, shall occupy her much about her toilet. My little brothers, taught by nature, have known their parts for a long time by heart, which consist in clamouring incessantly, now for this, now for that. Hitherto we have all of us divided the care

of satisfying them, now it must all rest upon her alone. You, good Beata, will be delegated, upon every fitting occasion, and in a skilful manner, to introduce commendations of Algernon, which you will not find difficult to award him. Emilia looks upon us all as a party for him; you cannot be suspected of it, and your praise will therefore operate all the better."

I was quite pleased with my commission. It is always agreeable to praise people when one can do it with a good conscience.

After we had spoken for a long time of Emilia and her beloved, of her establishment, and so on, I turned the conversation upon the blind girl, and endeavoured to obtain more knowledge of her.

Helena avoided this subject, and merely said, "Elisabeth has been a year with us. We like her, and hope in time to win her confidence, and thereby be able to make her happier."

After this, Helena proposed to me to visit her. "I go generally," said she, "every forenoon to her, and have not been there to-day. I would willingly give her much of my time, if she would not rather be alone."

We went together to the blind girl's room.

She sate dressed upon her bed, and sang softly to herself.

"Oh, how much has she not suffered! she is a living image of pain!" thought I, as I now approached

her, and in the daylight contemplated that pale, lovely countenance, in which were intelligible traces of a severe and not yet ended fight, and of a pain too deep, too bitter, to be expressed by tears.

A young girl, whose rosy cheeks and gay exterior formed a strong contrast with the poor sufferer, sate in a corner of the room and sewed. She was there to wait upon the blind girl. With a touching cordiality in word and voice, Helena spoke to Elisabeth; she replied coldly and in monosyllables! It seemed to me as if she endeavoured, after we entered, to assume by degrees that cold and inanimate expression which I remarked in her on the foregoing evening. The conversation was continued only between Helena and me, whilst the blind girl silently occupied herself with winding and unwinding a black silk cord around her remarkably beautiful hands. All at once she said, "st! st!" and a faint crimson flamed up on her cheeks, and her bosom heaved higher. We were silent and listened; after a few seconds we heard the dull sound of footsteps, which slowly approached. "It is he!" said she, as if to herself. I looked inquiringly upon Helena. Helena looked upon the ground. The Colonel entered. The blind girl rose up, and remained standing still as a statue; yet I thought that I remarked in her a light tremor. The Colonel talked to her with his customary calmness, although, as I thought, not with his customary kindness; and said that he was come to fetch her, because

he would drive out her and Emilia. "The air," added he, "is fresh and clear, it will do you good."

"Me good?" said she with a bitter smile; but without heeding it the Colonel desired Helena to assist her in dressing. The blind girl said nothing, let herself be silently dressed, thanked nobody, and went out conducted by the Colonel.

"Poor Elisabeth," said Helena with a compassionate sigh, when she was gone. I had not indeed the key to this enigmatical being, but had seen enough to make me sigh also heartily, "Poor Elisabeth!"

We returned to our work, which was continued, amid pleasant conversation, till noon.

I went then to Emilia, who was returned from her drive, and found her contending with Julie, who endeavoured with real anxiety to take from her a dress which Emilia seemed to wish to put on. Emilia laughed heartily; Julie, on the contrary, looked as if she would cry.

"Help, Beata, help!" exclaimed she, "did any one ever hear or see such a thing? Listen, Beata! Precisely because Emilia expects Algernon to-day will she put on her ugliest dress—yes, a dress which becomes her so ill that she does not look like herself in it! And not satisfied with that, she will put on an apron as thick as a swaddling-band, and she will put a comb in her hair which Medusa must certainly have left among her effects, it was so horrible! Now I have contended and laboured for a quarter of an hour against this unlucky toilet, but in vain!"

“If in Algernon’s eyes,” said Emilia with a dignified air and countenance, “merely a dress or a comb can contribute to make one agreeable or disagreeable, then—

“See, there we have it!” exclaimed Julie disconcerted, “now we are come to the proofs, and I know not how ugly and horrible she may make herself in order to prove whether Algernon will not exceed in fidelity all the most renowned heroes of romance. I pray you, for God’s sake, do not cut off either your ears or your nose!” Emilia laughed. “And you could so easily be handsome and amiable,” continued Julie, beseeching earnestly, whilst she endeavoured to get possession of the unfortunate dress and comb. “I have determined to be thus dressed to-day,” answered Emilia solemnly, “I have my reasons for it, and if I awaken your and Algernon’s abhorrence—then I must submit myself to my fate.”

“Emilia will nevertheless be handsome,” said I to Julie with an attempt to console her, “go now and dress yourself for dinner. Think that you also have a bridegroom to please.”

“Ah,” said Julie, “with him this is not difficult, if I were to dress myself in a bag and put a jug on my head, he would find that it became me excellently.”

“Then you believe,” returned Emilia, “that Algernon has not the same eyes for me, as Arvid for you?”

Julie looked somewhat confused.

“Go now, go,” I interrupted, “we shall never be

ready; go Julie, I shall help Emilia, and I dare wager anything that she will be handsome against her will." Julie went at length to Helena, who every day combed and plaited her remarkably lovely hair.

Alone with Emilia, and whilst I assisted her with the grey-brown dress, which in truth was unbecoming, I said to her some few, according to my opinion, sensible words on her state of mind and conduct. She replied to me—"I confess that I am not as I ought to be: I wish I could be otherwise; but I feel so little calm, and so little happy, that at times I cannot govern myself. I am now about to form a connexion which it perhaps would have been better never to have agreed to, and if, during the time which yet remains to me, I should be convinced that my fears are well founded, nothing in the world shall prevent me making an end of this connexion, and thereby preventing my being unhappy for my whole life. For if it be true that one finds a heaven in a happy marriage, it is just as true that an unhappy one is a hell."

"If you do not love Mr. S——," said I, "I really wonder that you have allowed the affair to go so far."

"Not love him?" repeated Emilia with great astonishment; "certainly I love him, and therein exactly lies my misfortune; my love blinds me to the perception of his faults."

"Nobody would have imagined that, after what you have just said," replied I, smiling.

“Ah yes! ah yes!” said Emilia, “it is so, nevertheless; some are so palpable that one cannot be blind to them; for example, he is too young.”

“How unworthy,” said I, laughing; “that is actually mean of him.”

“Yes, you may laugh. For me, it is really not laughable. I will not say precisely that it is his fault; but it is all the same as a fault in him in regard to me. I am twenty-six years old, and thus am nearly past the boundary of my youth; he is merely two years older, and consequently as a man is yet quite young. I shall be a venerable matron when he is yet a young man. Probably he may be inclined to frivolity, and gladly leave his old tiresome wife for——”

“Oho! oho!” interrupted I, “that is almost too long a perspective. Have you reason to suspect that he is a frivolous character?”

“Not exactly positive; but in this so frivolous age, truth and constancy are such rare virtues. I know that I am not Algernon’s first love—who will assure me that I shall be his last? I should be able to bear every thing excepting the infidelity of my husband—that I think I could not survive. I have said that to Algernon—he has assured me—but what will not a lover assure one of? Besides, how can I know whether he loves me with the pure, true love, which alone is strong and enduring? He may have for me only a fancy; and this is a weak, easily severed thread. I

have often thought (and it has often inwardly grieved me), that, perhaps, my property, or that which I may one day have, has influenced—”

“No, now you go too far,” said I; “you see ghosts in daylight. How can you only seize upon suspicions? You have known him—”

“Only for two years,” interrupted Emilia; “and nearly from the first moment of our acquaintance he paid court to me, and has naturally shewn to me only his amiable side. And who, indeed, can see into the heart of man? See, Beata, I cannot say that I know the man with whom I would unite my fate. And how could I become acquainted with him? When people only see one another in regular precise social life, in which scarcely any character has the opportunity of developing itself, one becomes acquainted only with the external and the superficial. A person may be passionate, avaricious, inclined to bad and peevish tempers; and what is worse than all this, may be without all religion; and yet one might see him for whole years in the social circle without suspecting the least of all this; and in particular, the person whom he is desirous of pleasing can know the least of this.”

I did not know rightly what I should say. I thought that this description was true, and Emilia’s fears not unfounded.

She continued:

“Yes, if one had known and seen one another for

ten years, especially if one had travelled together,—for on a journey one is not so much on one's guard, and shews most of one's natural character and temper,—then one might know tolerably well what a man is."

"That method," said I, "would be tiresome and difficult enough, however excellent one might find it; and would at furthest only be suitable for lovers during the time of the crusades. In our days, people walk in Queen Street and drive at farthest to the North Gate. One cannot diverge more than that. During this ramble, people see the world, and are seen by them; people greet and are greeted; people talk, and joke, and laugh, and find one another so agreeable, that after the little journey, they feel no more indecision about undertaking the great journey through life. But now, to talk seriously, have you never spoken openly with Algernon on the subjects on which you consider it so important to know his opinions?"

"Yes, many times," replied Emilia, "especially since we have been betrothed; and I have always found, or have fancied I have found, in him, the opinions and feelings which I wished—but ah! I may so easily have blinded myself, because I secretly wished it. Possibly, also, Algernon, in his zeal to please me, has deceived himself regarding himself. I am resolved to make use of all my observation to discover the reality and truth, during the short time which remains to me of my freedom; and shall not, if

I can help it, through wilful blindness, make him and me unhappy. Granted even that he were quite perfect, yet he might not be suitable for me, nor I for him; our tempers and characters might at bottom be wholly unaccordant."

Amid all these troubling conjectures Emilia was dressed, and one was forced to acknowledge that her costume did not become her. She closed the conversation by saying—"I wish sometimes that I really were married; then I should escape plaguing myself with the thought that I would marry."

"Inconsistency of the human mind," thought I.

At dinner Emilia's toilet was universally blamed, especially by the Cornet. Julie was silent, but spoke with her eyes. The Colonel said nothing; but observed Emilia with a rather sarcastic mien, which made her blush.

After dinner Julie said to Emilia—"Sweet Emilia, I did not mean that Algernon really would not think you quite amiable if you were dressed in sackcloth and ashes; I would merely say, that it is not right if a bride does not endeavour in all ways to please her bridegroom. I meant that it would be right—that it would be wrong—that it——"

Here Julie lost the thread of her demonstration, and was almost as embarrassed as a certain burgo-master who was in the same predicament. Emilia pressed her hand kindly and said, "You have, and that quite happily, followed out your principles; for

I have seldom seen you better dressed, and, beyond that, more charming, than you look to-day, and certainly Arvid will think so."

Julie blushed, but had more pleasure in these words of her sister than she would have felt in a compliment of her bridegroom.

Towards evening, all the bustle in the house was ended, all retook its former excellent order; and her Honour was also at rest.

Algernon and Lieutenant Arvid arrived at tea-time. Emilia and Julie blushed like June roses; the first looked down, and the latter looked up.

Algernon looked so happy to see Emilia again was so occupied with her alone, gave so little attention to her toilet, which he did not honour with a glance, but was evidently so charmed, so happy, and so amiable, that by degrees the joy which beamed from his eyes kindled a sympathetic glance in Emilia's, and, spite of dress, apron, and comb, she was during this evening so charming and agreeable that Julie forgave the toilet.

Lieutenant Arvid was no less delighted with his little amiable bride; although it seemed to be no affair of his to express it, like Algernon, in lively and select language. Eloquence is not given to all, and every one has his own way. He drank tea, three cups, ate a dozen rusks, kissed the hand of his bride, and looked entirely happy. I heard him say several times, "The thousand fetch me!" and found that a

handsome mouth and pleasant voice could soften the unpleasantness of ugly words. Lieutenant Arvid is, in truth, an Adonis.—N.B. An Adonis with a moustache.

His countenance expressed goodness and honesty, but (I beg him a thousand times pardon) something also of foolishness and self-love. His handsome twenty-years-old head did not seem to entertain many ideas.

Algernon had a remarkably noble exterior, in which manliness, goodness, and intelligence, were the chief characteristics. He was tall, had regular, handsome features, and a most agreeable and distinguished deportment.

How, methought I, can Emilia cast her eye upon that noble countenance, and not feel all her fears, all her anxieties, vanish?

For this evening they did vanish, or withdrew into the soul's darkest background. The whole family seemed to be happy, and all was joy and life.

The blind girl, on this evening, did not appear in the company.

FIVE DAYS BEFORE THE BRIDAL.

SPITE of her joy and the satisfaction with which Monday came to an end, Emilia woke on Tuesday morning with the exclamation, "Now one day less till the horrible day!"

Beautiful presents from Algernon came in during the forenoon. Emilia did not like the custom of the bridegroom making presents to his beloved.

"It is a barbarian custom," said she, "which turns woman into a piece of merchandise, which the husband, as it were, buys. It ought to be enough to make all civilised nations abandon the usage, when they know the custom of all savage and barbarous people."

Besides this, she found in some of the presents too little regard paid to the useful, too much of luxury and the merely showy.

"If he be only not a spendthrift!" said she, sighing. "How little he knows me, if he thinks that I love jewels better than the flowers given by him. However much I love the graceful and the elegant, I am but little attracted by outward magnificence, by

pomp and splendour. Besides, these are not suitable for our circumstances."

Emilia's goodhumour was over; she scarcely noticed the presents, over which Julie could not cease to exclaim, "enchanting! charmant!" Through the whole forenoon she never took the curl-papers from her hair, and went about wrapped in a great shawl, which hung awry. The Cornet compared her to a Hottentot, and besought her not to fancy that, although she was surrounded by 'savage and barbarous customs,' she could turn a savage. When we went down to dinner, I said to her, in order to act my part as a skilful and worthy commendator, how uncommonly handsome and charming I thought Algernon.

"Yes," replied Emilia, "he is very handsome, much handsomer as man than I am as woman, and this I consider a real misfortune."

"See then," thought I, "now I have run again upon a sandbank!"

Emilia continued. "It is rare that a remarkably handsome exterior does not make him who possesses it vain; and the most unbearable thing that I know is a man who is in love with his own person. He commonly thinks it to be the first duty of his less handsome wife to honour and to worship his beauty and his amiability. Vanity lessens women, but degrades men. According to my opinion, the exterior of a man is of little or of no consequence to his wife. I should be able, I am convinced, to worship a noble

Esop, and would have him a thousand times rather than an Adonis. A Narcissus, who worships his own image, see, is what I find most disgusting.”

As Emilia spoke these last words she opened the drawing-room door. Algernon was alone in the room, and stood—before the glass! observing himself, as it seemed, with great attention. One should have seen how Emilia blushed, and with what a demeanour she received her bridegroom; who, on his part, confounded by her confusion and her amazed appearance, perhaps also somewhat embarrassed at having been caught in his *tête-à-tête* with the glass, was completely out of countenance. It was now my business to support the conversation with remarks on the weather, the roads, and so on.

Fortunately now came in the rest of the family, which made a wholesome diversion.

Emilia continued to look troubled; and as he looked at her, Algernon's countenance became dark by degrees. I thought I remarked that he had a sty on his left eye, and considered it probable that this had occasioned his *tête-à-tête* in the glass, but Emilia will not see it. Various trifles contributed to make the understanding worse between the two lovers. Algernon accidentally discovered that he had pleasure in things which did not please Emilia, and he let Emilia's favourite dish pass by him at table. Emilia found out, of a certainty, that they did not in the least sympathise. Algernon made a true but not

biting observation, and without particular application, about ill-temper and the disagreeables of it. Nevertheless, it should have not been said at this time. Emilia applied it to herself, and assumed more of a genteel and dignified demeanour. Julie was anxious. "It would be much better," said she, "that they should quarrel with one another, than that they should sit and be silent and be inwardly angry."

Cornet Carl went to Emilia and said, "My gracious sister, I pray you do not sit there like the Chinese Wall, impenetrable to all the arrows which Algernon's loving eyes shoot at you. Look, if you can, a little less icy. Look at Algernon; go to him, and give him a kiss!" Yes, looked that likely indeed! sooner might one have expected to see the Chinese Wall set itself in motion. Emilia looked not once at Algernon, who seemed infinitely to long after reconciliation. He proposed that they should sing together a newly-published Italian duet, probably in the hope that the soul of the harmony should chase away all hostile and ungentle feelings which disturbed the peace between him and his beloved; and that the duet's "*Cor mio mio ben*" would soon also tone into her heart. Vain hope! Emilia excused herself with headache. She had it actually, and that in a high degree, as I could see by her eyes. She was accustomed to have it easily when she was troubled and disquieted. Algernon fancied the headache a fiction; and without troubling himself about his bride, who sate in a corner

of the sofa, supporting on her hands her disturbed head, made known his intention of hearing Mozart's Figaro at the opera, bowed hastily to all, and went out.

The evening crept on slowly. Nobody was in a good or gay humour. Every one said that Emilia suffered, therefore no one expressed any displeasure at her conduct.

The Colonel alone seemed to remark nothing, and quietly laid his patience.

As we separated for the night, the Cornet said to me in a whisper, "It goes quite crazily. To-morrow we must fire off a whole battery of distractions."

Wednesday came. Algernon rose early. His look was so tender, his voice so full of fervency when he talked to Emilia, that she thawed, and tears filled her eyes. All was right between the lovers. Nobody knew how or wherefore, not even themselves.

This day went quietly over, with the exception of two frights which Emilia had, and yet survived. The first occurred in the forenoon, during a conversation which Algernon had with "her Honour." Emilia heard expressions from him which convinced her for the moment that he was nothing less than the greatest miser on the earth. Fortunately she found soon afterwards that he merely quoted a word of a Harpagon of his acquaintance, at which he himself heartily laughed. Emilia breathed again, and joined him. The second happened in the afternoon, during a serious conver-

sation which some of us carried on, sitting in a window in the clear moonlight, while I asserted, "there are, nevertheless, noble and good people who are yet unfortunate enough to have no faith in another life, in no higher object of our existence. These are to be pitied, not to be blamed." With an indescribable expression of anxiety in her beautiful eyes, Emilia looked questioningly at me. Her thought was, "Is it Algernon whom you would excuse?" I replied to her, by turning her attention to Algernon, who, at my words, cast a glance up to the star-spangled heaven—and this glance was an expression of beautiful and firm hope. Emilia looked up also with thankfulness; and as their eyes met, they beamed with tenderness and joy.

This day was on the way to close so well. Ah! why during supper did Algernon receive a note; why during the reading be confused, and immediately lose much of his gaiety; why so hastily, and without saying any thing, go out?

Yes, why? Nobody knows that; but many of us would gladly have given his life to know it.

"Yet it never can occur to you to think ill of Algernon on account of that note?" said Julie to Emilia, as they went to bed.

"Good night, Julie!" said Emilia, sighing.

Emilia had no good night.

Thursday. Clouds and mists around Emilia. Vain attempts on our part to dissipate them. Immediately

after breakfast, the Cornet took the field with Napoleon and Charles the Twelfth. Emilia would not contend; Julie and Helena laboured in vain to enliven her. I ventured not on my part to say one single word. The note, the note, lay in the way of every thing.

At twelve o'clock Algernon came. He looked very much heated, and there was something uncommonly sparkling in his eyes. Emilia had promised him on the preceding day to drive him out in an open sledge; he came now to fetch her. A handsome sledge, adorned with magnificent rein-deer skins, stood at the door. Emilia declined to go with him, coldly and resolutely. "Why?" asked Algernon. "On account of the note," Emilia might have answered with truth; but she said,

"I wish to remain at home."

"Art thou unwell?"

"No."

"Why wilt thou not give me the pleasure of driving out with me as thou promisedest?"

"The note, the note," thought Emilia; but she only reddened, and said,

"I wish to remain at home."

Algernon was angry; he reddened hotly, and his eyes flashed. He went out, banging the door somewhat violently after him.

The servant who was left at the door with the sledge had in the mean time left it. The horse,

terrified by a fall of snow, and left to himself, backed, threw down an old woman, and would probably have set off, if Algernon, who just then came down, had not thrown himself forward and seized the reins with a powerful hand. After the horse was pacified, he called a man who was near, to whom he gave it to hold, and hastened himself to lift up the old woman, who was so frightened as not to be able to move, but who fortunately was not hurt in the least. He talked with her a little while, and gave her money.

To his servant, who came at length, he gave a box on the ear, threw himself into the sledge, took the reins himself, and drove off like lightning.

Emilia, quite pale, had stood by me at the window, and had observed this scene; at the last part of it, she exclaimed,

“He is violent, passionate, mad!” And she burst into tears.

“He has,” said I, “human weaknesses; and that is all. He came here in an excited and uneasy state of mind; your refusal to fulfil your given promise, and without assigning any reason for it, would naturally provoke him; the negligence of his servant, which had nearly occasioned a misfortune, increased his heat, which nevertheless only shewed itself by a box on the ear, very well deserved. It is quite too much to expect from a young man that he should conduct himself perfectly coldly and calmly when one vexation after another sets his temper in a ferment. It is suffi-

cient that during his passion he continues as humane and good, as we saw Algernon be just now towards the old woman. Besides, I believe, Emilia, that if you, instead of exciting Algernon's temper by ill-humour and unkindness (pardon me the two beautiful words), would use for good purpose the great power which we all of us have seen that you have over him, then you would never see him passionate and mad, as you call it."

I was much pleased with my little speech when I had ended it, and thought it would have a wonderfully great influence; but Emilia was silent, and looked unhappy.

Algernon did not return to dinner.

Cornet Carl related in the afternoon that he had heard from a comrade of his, of a duel which had taken place in the morning. One of the duellists was Algernon's best friend, and he had invited him to be his second. He had done this by a note (the Cornet said, with an emphatic voice) which was delivered here in this house, where Algernon was then last evening about a quarter to ten. Algernon had done all that was possible to prevent the duel—but in vain. The parties met, and Algernon's friend had dangerously wounded his enemy. The particulars were unknown to the Cornet.

Now was all explained, and Algernon's image stood bright before Emilia.

Algernon came towards evening. He was quite

calm, but grave; and did not go as usual to sit beside his bride. Emilia was not gay; seemed to fear making the first step towards reconciliation; and yet shewed, by many little attentions to Algernon, how much she wished to be reconciled to him. She made him tea herself; asked whether he found it sweet enough; whether she might send him another cup; and so on. Algernon remained cold towards her; seemed often to fall into deep thought, and forget where he was. Emilia withdrew herself, wounded; was quite dejected, and sate down at a distance to sew, and for a long time never looked up from her work.

Cornet Carl said to Helena and me, "This is not exactly right; but what in all the world can one do to make it better? I cannot now come forward again with Napoleon and Charles XII. I brought it forward this forenoon, and it did not succeed particularly well. One must confess that Emilia is not an amiable bride. If she be not different as a wife, then—— Should not she go now to Algernon, and try to comfort and to enliven him? See, now she goes. No, it is only to fetch a ball of cotton. Poor Algernon! I begin to think that it is a real good fortune for me to be so without feeling. Poor lovers suffer worse hardships than we soldiers taking our degrees. If I were a bridegroom.——God bless thee, little Clara, what is it that thou wants—a rusk? Go to Emilia, go to Emilia. I have no rusks. Yes, it will do her highness a little good to be moved."

The Cornet saw not how entirely humble her highness was this evening at the bottom of her heart; and that Algernon now was most to blame that the coldness continued between them.

Algernon and Emilia did not approach one another this evening, and parted coldly from each other—at least apparently so.

On Friday morning Emilia determined to make an end of their acquaintance. Algernon was noble, excellent; but he was too stern, and he loved her not. That she had plainly seen on the preceding evening. She would now have an especial conversation with him, and so on. Algernon came. He was much gayer than on the foregoing day, and seemed to wish that all disagreeables should be forgotten. Emilia was in the beginning solemn in the thoughts of her important intention; but Julie, Helena, her Honour, Cornet Carl, and I, bustled so about her, and we by degrees dragged her into our whirlpool, and prevented her both from private conversation and inward cogitation. People began after a while to hear again her hearty laugh, and her thoughtfulness did not relapse into melancholy.

In the afternoon of this day the marriage contract was signed.

Even the bride of Sir Charles Grandison, the beautiful Harriet Byron, dropped (so they say) the pen which she had taken to sign her marriage contract, and had scarcely strength and presence of mind

to subscribe her fate. Millions of young brides have trembled at this moment, and behaved like her; what wonder was there that the fearful and bashful Emilia was almost out of herself for terror? The pen did not only fall out of her hand, but made a great black blot upon the important paper, which she at that moment regarded as an omen of misfortune; and I doubt whether she now would have signed it, had not the Colonel (exactly like Sir Charles) taken the pen, set it between her fingers, signed and guided her trembling hand.

In the evening, when we were alone in our chamber, Emilia said, with a deep sigh,

"It must then take place! It cannot be helped any longer; and the day after to-morrow he will take me away from all whom I love so fervently."

"One might believe," said Julie, smiling, but with tears in her eyes, "that you were going to travel to the end of the world; and yet only a few streets and market-places will separate us from you, and we can see each other every day."

"Every day? Yes," said Emilia, weeping; "but not as now, every hour."

On Saturday, Emilia was kind and affectionate to every one, but dejected and uneasy, and seemed to wish to escape from the thoughts which pursued her every where.

Algernon became graver every moment, and observed his bride with troubled and searching looks.

It seemed as if he feared that with her hand she did not give him her whole heart; yet, nevertheless, he seemed to shun any kind of explanation, and avoided being alone with Emilia.

I had heard from a cousin of the cook's step-sister's sister-in-law, that Algernon had distributed among several poor families, money and victuals; with the observation, that on the Sunday they should have a good dinner, and make merry. I related this to Emilia, who on her part had done the same. This sympathy in their thoughts rejoiced her, and gave her again courage.

In the mean time, people on all sides had sewed and worked industriously, so that, the day before the wedding, all was ready and in order.

There was something solemn in the adieus of the evening. Every one embraced Emilia, and in all eyes stood tears. Emilia mastered her emotion, but could not speak. All thought upon the morrow.

THE WEDDING-DAY.

THE great, the expected, the dreaded day came at length. Emilia, scarcely arisen, looked with a foreboding glance up to heaven. It was overcast with grey clouds. The air was cold and damp; everything which one could see from the window bore that melancholy stamp which on the cold winter-day weighs both upon the animate and the inanimate. The smoke which ascended from the chimneys was depressed again, and rolled itself slowly over the roofs, blackening their white snow-covering. Some old women, with red noses and blue cheeks, drove their milk-carts to the market, step by step, dragged by lean horses, which hung their rough heads nearer than common to the earth. Even the little sparrows seemed not to be in their usual lively tempers; they sate still, and clung together along the roof-spouts, without twittering or eating. Now and then one of them stretched their wings and opened their little bills, but it was done evidently out of weariness. Emilia sighed deeply. A bright heaven, a little sunshine, would have cheered and refreshed her

depressed mind. Who does not wish that a bright sun may beam on their bridal-day? It seems to us as if Hymen's torch could not clearly burn if it be not kindled by the bright light of the beams of heaven. A secret belief that Heaven does not look with indifference on our earthly fate remains constantly in the depths of our hearts; and however we may be dust and atoms, yet we see, when the eternal vault is dimmed by clouds or shines in splendour, in this change always some sympathy or some foreboding which concerns us, and often, very often, are our hopes and our fears—children of winds and clouds.

Emilia, after a sleepless night, and depressed by the events of the preceding day, was quite dispirited by this dull morning. She complained of headache; and after she at breakfast had embraced her parents and her brother and sisters, she requested that she might pass the forenoon alone in her own room. It was allowed. The Colonel looked more serious than common. Her Honour had so troubled a demeanour that it went to my heart to see it. Anxiety and uneasiness for Emilia, cares and troubles for the wedding dinner, possessed her soul alternately, and all she said began with "Ah!" Neither was the Cornet cheerful; and Helena's expressive countenance had a slight trace of sorrow. Julie was inexpressibly amazed that a wedding-day could begin so gloomily, and changed her countenance incessantly, which was now ready to weep and now to laugh. Only Mr.

Magister and the Dumplings were in their usual state of mind. The former bit his nails, and was silent and looked up in the air; the latter never left off breakfast.

I assisted her Honour the whole forenoon, and it was not little which we had to do—in part talking, in part arranging, in part working ourselves and laying to a helping hand. We whipped citron creams, poured water upon the roasts, salted the bouillon, lamented over unlucky pastry, rejoiced ourselves over the magnificent set-out, and burnt our tongues over at least twenty sauces. Oh, those are no poetical flames which Hymen's torch kindles at the kitchen fire!

The Colonel himself prepared the bowls with bishop and punch, and occasioned us no little difficulty and disturbance; so many things, so many people, so much room, did he require for the purpose, and seemed to think that there was nothing else of consequence to be done; which no little angered her Honour. She gave her husband, therefore, a little lecture; and he—he conceded that she was right.

Whilst I instructed the cook on the most elegant manner of serving up a first course, Julie came running into the kitchen with tears in her eyes. "Give me! give me!" exclaimed she with her customary liveliness, "something good for Emilia;" she ate nothing at breakfast, she will be ill; she will die of mere fatigue to-day! What have you here? Boiled

eggs! I take two! Glasses of jelly! I take two! I may do so? Ah, a little caprin sauce, that makes one lively—and now a little bit of fish or meat to it, and a few French rolls—see! now some tarts—now then I am pleased. Emilia likes sweet things so!—Do you know what she is doing, Beata?” she continued, in a whisper: “She prays to God. I have peeped in through the key-hole; she is on her knees, praying. God bless her!” and bright pearls ran down Julie’s cheeks as she hastened out with these plates full, which she carried I cannot conceive how.

At length our arrangements came to an end; all was now left, together with the necessary instructions, in the hands of the servants and the Colonel. Her Honour and I went to dress ourselves for dinner.

Somewhat later I went in to Emilia. She stood before a glass, dressed in her bridal robe, and contemplated herself with a look which expressed neither that pleasure nor that self-satisfaction which a handsome and well-dressed woman almost always feels in the contemplation of her beloved I. Helena clasped her bracelet; and Julie was kneeling as she arranged some of the lace trimming. “Look,” exclaimed Julie, as I entered the room, “is she not sweet?—is she not lovely?—and yet,” added she in a whisper, “I would give half of that which I possess to purchase for her another mien; she looks as troubled and grey as the weather!” Emilia, who heard her sister’s words, said, “One cannot look gay when

one is not happy. Every thing seems to me so heavy, so unbearable! This day is a horrible day. I would willingly die!”

“Lord God!” said Julie to me, wringing her hands; “now she begins to cry. She will have red eyes and a red nose, and will not be handsome again. What shall we do?”

“Dear Emilia,” said Helena, mildly, as she conducted the hand of her sister to her mouth; “are not you a little irrational! This marriage is your own wish, as well as all our wishes. According to all by which human nature can form a judgment, you will be happy. Has not Algernon the noblest qualities? Does he not love you most tenderly? Where would you find a husband who would be for your parents a more affectionate son—for your brother and sisters a more devoted brother?”

“All this is true, Helena; or rather, all this seems like truth. But ah! when I think that I now stand at the point of changing my whole existence—that I shall leave my parents—leave you, my good, my affectionate sisters—that home, where I have been so happy,—and this for the sake of a man whose heart I do not know as I know yours; whose conduct may change towards me, who may make me unhappy in so many ways. And this man will be in the future every thing to me,—my fate must be irrevocably bound to his. Ah! my sisters, when I think on all this, it becomes dark before my eyes. I

feel my knees tremble; and when I think that it is to-day—to-day—within a few hours, which shall decide my fate; and that I still have freedom, still can withdraw—then I feel the pang of indecision, of uncertainty, which nobody can conceive. Beata, my sister, never marry!”

“But sweetest Emilia,” began Helena again, “you who find it so easy to submit to necessity, think only that your fate is already decided, that it is already too late for you to renounce your own happiness.”

“Too late!” exclaimed Emilia, without regarding the last word. “Too late is it not, as long as the priest has not united us. Yes, even at the foot of the altar I have the right, and can——”

“And would you have the heart to do it?” interrupted Julie, in the most tragic tone; “would you drive Algernon to despair? You would actually——”

“A scene!” said a voice in the doorway; and the Colonel, with his arms folded, observing Julie with his comic look, whose attitude was not unlike that for which the celebrated Mademoiselle George is applauded in Semiramis and Maria Stuart. Julie reddened, but still more Emilia.

The Cornet, who followed his father, presented to his sister, from Algernon, some fresh exquisitely beautiful flowers, together with a note, which contained lines which were anything but cold and unmeaning. Emilia’s countenance cleared up—she pressed her brother’s hand. He threw himself on

his knee, in a rapture of knightly enthusiasm, and prayed for the favour of kissing the toe of her shoe. She extended to him, with a gracious mien, her little foot; and while he bent himself down, not as I thought to kiss the shoe-toe, but to bite it in two, she threw her arms around his neck, and kissed him heartily. The Colonel took her hand, led her into the middle of the room, and we all made a circle around her. When she saw her affectionate father's glances, and ours full of joy and love, riveted upon her, she was possessed by pleasant feelings, blushed, and was as lovely as ever Julie could have wished. Her dress was simple, but in the highest degree tasteful and elegant. For those of my young readers who wish to know something more of her toilet, here it is. She had on a white silk dress, trimmed with lace; and her light and wonderfully beautifully dressed hair, adorned with the green myrtle crown, over which a veil (Helena's magnificent work) was thrown in a picturesque manner, and which gave to her gentle and innocent countenance much resemblance to a Madonna of Paul Veronese. In order to make her enchanting, there failed only the expression of happiness, hope, and love, which is the most excellent ornament of the bride.

In the mean time, her heart seemed to have become somewhat lighter; and, as if in harmony with her feelings, the sun broke forth from the clouds, and threw his pale beams into the room.

The outward, as well as the inward brightness, lasted but for a moment. It darkened again. As we went down to dinner, Julie shewed to me with a lamenting look, that all that which she had carried up for Emilia was untouched—only one glass of jelly was emptied.

At dinner, Emilia looked around her at all those whom she should so soon leave; and her heart swelled, and tears incessantly filled her eyes. At dinner, nobody seemed to have their customary liveliness, and nobody seemed to eat with any appetite, with the exception always of the Magister and the Dump-lings. Emilia, who seemed more dejected under the myrtle crown than ever was king under the diadem, ate nothing; and laughed not once during the dinner, spite of the excellent occasions for so doing, which were given to her by three remarkable pieces of absence of mind of the Magister, at which not even the Colonel could avoid smiling. The first was, that he mistook his snuff-box and the salt-cellar, both of which stood beside him on the table; scattered a portion of snuff in his soup, and took a considerable pinch out of the salt-cellar, which caused him to make many strange grimaces, and to shed many tears. The second was, that in order to dry these, he, instead of his pocket handkerchief, seized hold on one corner of her Honour's shawl; which she, however, snatched from him with haste and horror. The third was, that he bowed and was ceremonious with the servant who

offered him meat; and prayed that the young lady would be so good as to help herself. Julie looked troubled in the extreme at her sister. "She neither eats nor laughs," whispered she to me; "it is pitiable!"

But it was more pitiable in the afternoon, when the guests who were invited collected; and Algernon, who was expected early, was not heard of at all. Her Honour wept, looking incessantly at the door, with the most uneasy countenance in the world; and came to me three or four times, only to say, "I cannot conceive why Algernon delays so!" The guests, who had arrived, asked also after him. Emilia asked not, did not look at the door; but one could very plainly see how, with every moment, she became more serious and paler. Julie seated herself near me; told me who the guests were as they arrived, and added thereto some observations. "That handsome, well-grown lady, who carries herself so well, is the Baroness S——. Who, indeed, would believe, that every time she enters a drawing-room she is so embarrassed that she trembles? Look at her intellectual eyes, but trust them not; she can talk of nothing but the weather, and at home she yawns all the day to herself. Who comes now, and holds his hat in so beggar-like a manner before him, as he comes through the door? Ha, ha! Uncle P—— That is a good old fellow, but he is lethargic; I shall give him a kiss instead of a farthing. God grant only that he

do not snore during the ceremony. Look at my Arvid, Beata! there by the stove. Is he not an Apollo? I think that he warms himself too much at his own convenience—he seems altogether to have forgotten that there is anybody in the room. That is my cousin, Mrs. M——, who is now come in. She is an angel; and the little delicate person encloses a large soul.

“Look how Emilia receives them all; altogether as if she would say, ‘You are very good, gentlemen and ladies, who come to witness my funeral.’ I cannot conceive what Algernon is thinking about that he tarries so long. Gracious Heavens! how unhappy Emilia looks.

“See, there is the clergyman. Spite of his warts and his red eye, he looks attractive; I feel, as it were, respect for him.

“Look how Carl tries to enliven and to occupy Emilia. Well done brother; but it helps nothing.

“Now, thank God, here is Algernon at last. But how pale and serious he looks! And yet he is handsome. He goes up to her—see only how proud her demeanour is. He excuses himself, I fancy. What! he has had a horrible toothache—has just had a tooth out! Poor Algernon! Toothache on his wedding-day! What a fate! See now, they all sit in a circle. A circle of sitting people gives me the vapours! What do they talk about? I fancy really that they talk about the weather. A most interesting subject,

that is certain! But it is not very enlivening. Hark! how snow and rain patter against the windows. It is horribly warm in here, and Emilia contributes to make the atmosphere heavy. I must go and speak to her."

Soon afterwards, some one came in, and said that people were crowding on the steps and in the hall, wishing to see the bride.

New torment for the bashful Emilia. She rose, but sate down again quickly, turning quite pale. Eau de Cologne! Eau de Cologne!" cried Julie to me; "she grows pale, she faints!" "Water!" exclaimed the Colonel, with thundering voice. The Magister took up the tea-kettle, and rushed forward with it. I know not whether it was the sight of this, or some effort of the soul to control her excited feelings, which enabled Emilia to overcome her weakness. She collected herself quickly, and went out, accompanied by her sisters, whilst she cast a glance of uneasiness and displeasure upon Algernon, who stood immovable at a distance, observing her with an usually, almost severe gravity.

"Are you mad!" exclaimed Uncle P——, half aloud; and seized the Magister by the arm, who now stood with bewildered eyes, and the tea-kettle in his hand. The Magister, terrified, turned himself round hastily and stumbled over "the Dumplings," who fell one over the other like two ninepins which the ball has struck. The tea-kettle in the hand of the

Magister wagged about, burnt his fingers, and he dropped it with a cry of pain on the unlucky little ones, over whose immovable bodies a cloud of whirling steam ascended. If the moon had fallen down, it could not have occasioned a greater confusion than at the first moment of this catastrophe with the teakettle. Axel and Claes uttered no sound, and her Honour was ready to believe that it was all over with the little Dumplings. But after Algernon and the Colonel had lifted them up, and shook them, it was perceived that they were perfectly alive. They were only so astonished, frightened, so out of themselves, that at the first moment they could neither move nor speak. Fortunately, the hot water wherewith they were wetted, had for the greater part run upon their clothes; besides this, it was probably somewhat cooled, because people had left off drinking tea for half an hour. Only one spot upon Axel's forehead and Claes' left hand required looking after. The Magister was in despair—the little ones cried. They were put to bed in a room, in which I promised to spend as much time with them as I had to dispose of. Her Honour, whose amiable kindness would not quietly permit there to be an unhappy face near her, next consoled the Magister. She succeeded best in so doing, by calling upon him to observe with what a true Spartan courage the little boys had borne the first shock, and she regarded it as a remarkable proof of the excellent education he had given them. The Magister was

quite happy, and quite warm, and drawing himself up, said that he hoped to bring up her Honour's sons as real Spartans. Her Honour hoped that this would not be done by renewed shower-baths of boiling water; but she was silent in her hope.

In the mean time, the exhibition of the bride was ended; and Emilia, fatigued, left the room where, according to the customary, strange, but old usage of Sweden, she had been compelled to shew herself to a crowd of curious and indifferent people.

"They did not think her handsome," said Julie to me, in a doleful tone; "and that was not extraordinary; she was dark and cold as an autumn sky."

We had conducted Emilia to a distant room, in order that she might rest a moment. She sank down in a chair, put her handkerchief before her face, and was silent.

Every thing in the drawing-room was ready for the ceremony. They waited only for Emilia.

"Smell at the eau de Cologne, Emilia! Sweet Emilia, drink a glass of water," prayed Julie, who now began to tremble.

"They wait for you, best Emilia!" said Cornet Carl, who now came into the room and offered to conduct his sister out. "I cannot—I really cannot go;" said Emilia, with a voice expressive of the deepest anxiety.

"You cannot!" exclaimed the Cornet, with the greatest astonishment. "Why?" And he looked

inquiringly at us all. Julie stood in a tragic attitude, with her hands clasped above her head. Helena sat with an expression of displeasure upon her placid countenance; and I—I cannot possibly remember what I did; but in my heart I sympathised with Emilia. None of us answered.

“No, I cannot go,” continued Emilia, with emphasis altogether unusual. “I cannot take this oath, which is binding for ever. I have a positive foreboding—we shall be unhappily united—we are not suited for each other. It may be my fault—but it is, for all that, certain. At this moment he is certainly displeased with me—looks upon me as a whimsical being—thinks with repugnance of uniting his destiny with such a one. His severe glance says all this to me. He may be right, perfectly right; and therefore it is best for him, as for me, that we now separate.”

“But Emilia!” exclaimed her brother; “do you think on what you are saying? It is now too late. The clergyman is really here—the bridal guests—Algernon——”

“Go to him,” best Carl, “exclaimed Emilia, with increasing emotion; “pray him to come here; I will myself talk to him, tell him all. It cannot be too late when it concerns the peace and happiness of a whole life. Go, I beseech of you, go!”

“Good Heavens! Good Heavens! What will be the end of it?” said Julie; and looked as if she would call heaven and earth to help. “Think on papa, Emilia!”

“I shall throw myself at his feet—he will not wish the eternal unhappiness of his child!”

“If we could divert her mind from this—occupy her for a moment with any thing else!” whispered Helena to her brother.

Cornet Carl opened the door, as if to go out; and at the same moment we heard the sound of a heavy blow. “Ah, my eye!” cried the Cornet. A universal terror took place, because this little deceit was played off so naturally that at the first moment none of us thought that it was a trick.

Emilia, always ready to be the first to hasten to the help of others, was the same now, spite of her own great uneasiness, and rushed to her brother with a pocket handkerchief dipped in cold water; drew his hand from his eye, and began with fervency and anxiety to bathe it, whilst she asked with uneasiness, “Is it very bad? Do you think the eye is injured? Fortunately there is no blood——”

“It is perhaps therefore the more dangerous,” said the Cornet, dryly; but an unfortunate treacherous smile nullified at the same moment the whole guile. Emilia observed it nearer, and quite convinced herself that the blow was any thing but real. “Ah!” said she, “I see what it is. It is one of your jokes; but it will not mislead me. I pray, I conjure you, Carl, if you have the least affection for me, go to Algernon; tell him that I beseech for a few minutes’ conversation with him.”

“That none of you had the *présence d’esprit* to blow out the candle!” exclaimed the Cornet, and looked angrily at us, especially at me. Helena whispered something to him, and he went out of the room, followed by Julie.

Helena and I were silent, whilst Emilia, in evident anguish of mind, went up and down the room, and seemed to talk to herself. “What shall I do? How shall I act?” said she several times, half aloud. We now heard footsteps in the next room. “He comes!” said Emilia; and her whole frame trembled. The door opened, and Algern—; no, the Colonel entered, with an expression of imposing gravity. Emilia gasped for breath, seated herself, rose up again, grew pale, and crimsoned.

“You have waited too long for yourself,” said he, calmly, but not without severity; “I now come to fetch you.”

“Emilia clasped her hands, looked beseechingly up to her father, opened her lips, but closed them again, discouraged by the stern, grave expression of his countenance; and as he took her hand, all power of resistance seemed to abandon her; and with a sort of despairing submission, she arose and allowed her father to lead her out. Helena and I followed them.

The drawing-room was strongly lighted, and all the people there had their eyes directed to the door through which Emilia, conducted by her father, entered.

She has told me since then that at her entrance she could not have distinguished one single object, and that every thing was black before her eyes. "Then it is not wonderful," said her brother, "that you looked as if you were walking in your sleep."

"Algernon regarded her with a seriousness which at this moment did not inspire her with courage.

Neither of them spoke. The drama began. The young couple stood before the clergyman, Emilia was pale as death, and trembled. Julie altogether lost heart. "It is terrible!" said she, and was nearly as pale as her sister.

Now the voice was heard which announced their holy duties to the young married pair. The voice was deep and well-toned, and seemed to be animated by a divine spirit. It spoke of the sanctity of the state of wedlock, and the mutual obligations of the husband and wife to love one another, to lighten to each other the fatigues of life, to soften its appointed cares, to be an ensample to each other in a true fear of God; it spoke of those prayers for each other which unite so inwardly, which draw them towards the eternal First Cause; of how the highest felicity on earth is assisted by a union which in this way is begun and continued in the will of God—and then called down the blessing of the Most High upon the young married pair. Those words, so pleasant, so beautiful, so peaceful, awoke in every breast quiet and holy emotions. All was so still in the room, that

one might have thought that nobody was in it. I saw plainly that Emilia became calmer every moment. The few words which she had to say, she spoke out intelligibly, and with a firm voice. Whilst she knelt, it seemed to me that she prayed with hope and devotion. I cast, in the mean time, abundant glances around me. The Colonel was paler than common; but contemplated the young couple with an expression full of composure and tenderness. Her Honour wept, and looked not up from her pocket handkerchief. Julie was greatly affected, although she moved neither hand nor foot. Helena looked up to Heaven, with prayers in her bright eyes. The Cornet was at some trouble to make it appear that it was something else beside tears which made his eyes so red; the blind girl smiled quietly; the remainder of the spectators seemed more or less affected, especially the Magister, who alone, towards the close of the ceremony, interrupted the silence by blowing his nose aloud. Fortunately he had his pocket handkerchief.

The blessings were spoken over the bridal pair by a voice as delightful as majestic, as if it had come from heaven. The marriage was ended. Emilia and Algernon were united for ever. Emilia turned herself round to embrace her parents. She seemed to me to be quite another person. A mild beaming glory seemed to rest upon her brow, and smiled from her eyes; a clear and warm crimson glowed upon her cheeks. She was all at once changed to the ideal of a young and happy bride.

“God be praised, God be praised!” whispered Julie with tears in her eyes, and clasped her hands, “now all is right!”

“Yes, now it can no longer be helped!” said the Colonel, endeavouring to control his emotion and to assume his comic expression, “now you are fast—now you can no more say ‘no!’”

“I shall not wish to do so any more,” replied Emilia, smiling charmingly, and looking up to Algeron with an expression which called forth in his countenance a lively and pure delight. A sentiment of satisfaction and cheerfulness diffused itself through the company. Every one looked as if they had a mind to sing and dance. Uncle P——, who was wide awake, called for a quadrille, and stamped his feet merrily by the side of the elegant Baroness S——, who, zephyr-like, floated up and across the floor. Julie and Arvid distinguished themselves in the dance in a charming manner; people could not take their eyes from this attractive couple. I danced with the Magister, who invited me as I hope—not out of absence of mind. We distinguished ourselves, though in a peculiar manner.

It seemed to me as if we were a pair of billiard balls, which perpetually lay ready to jostle the other. Certain it is, that we were in part pushed, and in part pushed others continually, which I particularly attribute to my cavalier’s incessantly confusing left and right, as well as all the figures of the quadrille.

In the mean time we laughed as well and as loudly as the others at our droll skippings about, and the Magister said that he had never before danced such a lively *waltz*!

Helena played on the piano for the dancing. Emilia wished not to dance; she sate in a little boudoir, the doors of which opened into the dancing-room. Algeron was at her side. They talked low, with animation and affection in their looks, and I fancy that in this moment the gorgian knot of all misunderstanding, all uncertainty, all uneasiness, all doubt, which hitherto had divided them, was loosened for ever. The mild lustre of one solitary lamp, beaming through its alabaster globe, cast magical light over the young married pair, who now seemed to be as happy as they were handsome.

They seemed to forget the whole world around them, but none of the company had forgotten them. Every one threw stolen glances into the boudoir, and smiled. Julie came many times to me shewing me the affectionate pair, and said "See, see!"

Later in the evening a great part of the company assembled in the boudoir, and a general conversation ensued.

Some works which had lately been published, and which lay on a table, gave occasion to various observations on their worth and on reading in general.

"I cannot comprehend," said Uncle P——, speaking in his Finnish dialect, "what is come to me for

some time; I am in a common way as wide awake and as lively as a fish, but the moment I cast my eyes into curs—books they drop down directly upon my nose, and I can see nothing of God's gifts."

"Have you pleasure in reading, gracious Aunt?" asked Emilia from the Baroness S——.

"Ah, good heavens!" replied she, casting her beautiful eyes up to the ceiling, "I have no time for that, I am so occupied;" and she wrapped carefully around her her magnificent shawl.

"If I should ever marry," said a gentleman of probably sixty years, "I should make it a condition with my wife, that she should never read any other books beside the hymn-book and the cookery-book."

"My late wife read no other books; but then—what a splendid housekeeper she was!" exclaimed Uncle P——, as he dried his eyes and took a pinch of snuff.

"Yes, I cannot conceive, the thousand fetch me! why ladies now-a-days busy themselves so with reading, the thousand fetch me! I cannot understand," said Lieutenant Arvid, stretching forth to a plate of confectionery and taking a handful.

Julie cast a bitter glance at her bridegroom, and I fancy that "the thousand fetch me!" this time struck her as not very agreeable.

"I would," said she, reddening with vexation, "much rather dispense with meat and drink than be deprived of reading. Is there anything which is more ennobling to the soul than the reading of good

books? Anything which elevates more the soul—I would say, elevates the thoughts and feelings to——over——to——”

My poor little Julie was never fortunate when she would strike up into the sublime. Her thoughts were rather of the nature of rockets, which mount suddenly upward like glowing rays of fire, but are extinguished in almost the same manner, and lose themselves in ashes.

Cornet Carl hastened to spill a glass of wine and water over Lieutenant Arvid, and pretended that he had interrupted his sister's speech by his exclamation.

“Did I not know that it would go crazily; I tried to balance the glass upon the point of my thumb. Pardon, brother-in-law, but I fancy that you certainly sate in my way. I had not my arm at liberty——”

“I will certainly take care and not disturb you another time,” said Lieutenant Arvid, half merrily and half vexed, as he stood up and dried his coat with his pocket-handkerchief, and out of circumspection took a seat on the other side of the room.

In the mean time Julie could not so quickly get out of her dilemma. The old book-hating gentleman turned himself with great gravity to her, and said—

“I presume that cousin Julie reads, for the most part, moral books and sermons?”

“N—o—, not exactly so much sermons,” replied Julie; and, as she just then became aware of the searching glance with which Professor L—— observed her, she crimsoned deeply.

"Probably cousin reads history more?—that is truly a very excellent study."

"Not directly *history*," said Julie, again lively and courageous, "but *histories*, on the contrary, most gladly. Short and good, if my uncle will know for what reading I would willingly resign eating and drinking, then it is—novels."

The old gentleman lifted up his eyes and his hands with an expression of horror. From his countenance one might have been tempted to believe that Rousseau's assertion, "*jamais fille sage n'a lu de romans*," had made him abominate such dangerous reading.

Something of displeasure betrayed itself in almost every one's looks at Julie's candid declaration. The Baroness seemed altogether shocked at her niece. The Professor alone smiled, full of goodness, and the Cornet said, full of zeal:

"It is really not extraordinary that people read such novels as are written now-a-days. Madame De Stael's '*Corinne*' has cost me a sleepless night; and on account of Sir Walter Scott's '*Rebecca*,' I have for three days lost my appetite."

Julie looked at her brother with the greatest amazement. Emilia's mild blue eyes were raised to him inquiringly; but he thought it best to avoid them.

"My Euphemie shall never read novels," said Baroness S —; upon which, she set her lips firmly together, and seated herself higher in the corner of the sofa, and looked down at her handsome shawl.

"Ah, my aunt!" said Mrs. M——, smiling and shaking her head, "but then, what shall she read?"

"She shall read nothing at all."

"A most excellent idea!" said the old gentleman.

"I think, really," said Algernon, "that it is better to read nothing than to read *only* novels. Novel reading is for the soul, what opium is for the body; an uninterrupted, continued use of it weakens and injures. Pardon, Julie, but I think that a young lady could better employ her time than in devoting it to this reading."

Julie looked as if she had no desire to pardon this remark.

Emilia said, "I think with Algernon, that (especially for young ladies) this reading is far more injurious than useful."

Tears filled Julie's eyes, and she looked at Emilia as if she would say, "Do you set yourself against me?"

"I confess," said Mrs. M——, "that they may be very injurious if—"

"Injurious!" interrupted the old gentleman, "say destructive, poisonous, ruinous to the very foundation."

Julie laughed. "Best Professor," cried she, "help! help! I begin almost to believe that I am a lost and misguided being. Say, I beseech you, something in favour of the novel readers, and then I will give you something good;" and, archly laughing, she held up a garland of confectionery.

"It has, certainly, its entirely good side," replied the Professor, "when it is used with discretion and moderation. For my part, I regard the reading of good novels as one of the most useful, as well as the most agreeable, for young people."

"Hear! hear!" exclaimed Julie, and clapped her hands.

"But that requires reasons, my good sir; it requires reasons!" cried Uncle P——.

"Yes, yes—reasons! reasons!" cried the old gentleman.

"Good novels," continued the Professor, "that is to say such as, like good pictures, represent nature with truth and beauty, possess advantages which are united in no other books in the same degree. They present the history of the human heart; and for what young person, desirous of becoming acquainted with himself and his fellow beings, is not this of the highest worth and interest? The world is described in its manifold changing shapes in the liveliest manner, and youth sees here, with its own eyes, maps of the land over which they so soon must travel in the long journey through life. The beauty and amiability of every virtue is in novels represented in a poetical and attractive light. The young, glowing mind is charmed with that which is right and good, which, perhaps, under a more grave and severe shape, might have been repulsive.

"In the same manner, also, are vices and mean-

nesses exhibited in all their deformity; and one learns to despise them, even if they be surrounded by the greatness and the pomp of the world, whilst one feels enthusiasm for virtue, even though it struggles under the burden of all the world's miseries.

"The true picture of the reward of the good and the punishment of the bad among men, however little their outward fate may bear traces thereof, is set forth in novels with all the clearness, life, and strength, which one must wish to be given to every moral truth, in order to maintain it rightly and univversally attractive, and productive of fruit.

"For the rest, it is natural that noble youth should love novels as their best friends, in whom they find again all the glowing, great, and beautiful feelings which they cherish in their own hearts, and which have given to them the first heavenly foreknowledge of felicity and immortality."

Julie now started up with warm delight in her charming countenance, went to the Professor, gave him, not the sweetmeat garland, but embraced him with child-like devotion, whilst she said to him, "A thousand thanks! a thousand thanks! I am contented, quite contented."

The old gentleman looked up to heaven and sighed.

Lieutenant Arvid did not look "quite contented," but ate confectionery assiduously.

Uncle P—— slept and nodded; the Cornet declared that it was not, in token of approbation.

The Professor looked quite contented, and kissed, with an expression of fatherly kindness, first the lively maiden's hand, and then her brow.

Lieutenant Arvid pushed his chair with a great noise from him; at the same moment the doors of the supper-room opened—supper was announced.

A repast has always its peculiar interest for those who have had to do with its preparation, arrangement, and so on.

Every dish, the child of our care, has its own share of our interest and satisfaction, as it now stands adorned and fascinating upon the table, just about to vanish for ever. Yet one has, on such occasions, a heart of stone; and I am sure that her Honour enjoyed as much I did seeing how all the delicate fish, middle and after courses, vanished through the mouths of the bridal guests, evidently to their great delight and satisfaction. Her Honour, at ease about Emilia, and seeing how excellently well all was served, did the honours with a satisfaction and cheerfulness which seemed only to be disturbed by thoughts about the little Dumplings.

The bride was gentle and beaming. Algernon seemed to be the happiest of mortals. "Look at Emilia! look at Emilia!" said Cornet Carl, who was my neighbour at table, every ten minutes, "could one really believe that she was the same person who plagued herself and us so for half the day?"

Julie assumed a dignified and proud air towards

her lover whenever he spoke to her. He in the end did the same, and pouted, but always with his mouth full.

Uncle P—— dozed with a piece of blanc mange on his nose, and, amid the talk and laughter of the company, was heard now and then a snore, which sounded like the droning of a bas-viol which struck up to the tweedle-dees of little fiddles.

Towards the close of the repast skåls were drunk, not ceremoniously and tediously, but gaily and heartily. The Magister, warmed by the occasion and by the wine, made, glass in hand, the following impromptu in honour of the bridal pair—

Hand about the brimming glasses;
Hurrah! Let us drain the bowl!
Let the foam the ceiling sprinkle;
Happy couple — here's your skål!

Ring the glasses altogether!
May we e'en, as now, be gay;
When, in fifty years, we gladly
Keep your golden bridal-day!

Amid universal laughter and ringing of glasses the skål was drunk. Afterwards one was also drunk for the Magister, who, I am persuaded, now regarded himself as a little Bellman.*

After supper the most agreeable surprise was prepared for Emilia. Upon a large table in the drawing-room were spread the portraits of her parents and

* A celebrated Swedish popular poet.

her sisters, painted in oil, and most of them most striking likenesses.

“We shall in this manner all of us accompany thee to thy new home,” said the Colonel, embracing her; “yes, yes, thou wilt not get rid of us!”

Sweet tears ran down Emilia’s cheeks; she threw her arms around her father, her mother, her sisters, and was not for some time able to thank them. After this the company undertook to make an accurate examination of every portrait, and there was no lack of remarks of every kind. Here they discovered a fault in the nose; here in the eyes, which were too small; here in the mouth, which was too large; besides this, the artists had not laboured to beautify—rather the contrary, and so on.

Poor artists! see, then, the review which censoriousness—the most common of all maladies—compels your works to undergo. Poor artists! happy, happy for you, that you are often a little deaf, and are satisfied with the feeling of the money in your pockets and the consciousness of your talent in your souls!

Emilia alone saw no fault. It was precisely her father’s look and her mother’s smile; her sister Julie’s arch countenance, brother Carl’s hasty demeanour, Helena’s expression of kindness and peace; and the little Dumplings, O! they were astonishingly like. One had a desire to give them a sweetmeat.

The poor little Dumplings! burnt and frightened, they had been obliged to leave the feast, about which

they had rejoiced for three weeks. During the whole evening some of us had kept sneaking up to them with apples, sugar-bread, and so on. The Magister himself at first had been the most industrious upon the stairs; but after he had fallen down three several times upon this to him little known path, he remained quietly in the drawing-room. Her Honour had, during the evening, said at least six times to me, with an expression of the greatest disquiet, "My poor little boys! I shall positively sit up with them to-night!" And I replied, every time, "That shall not her Honour, but I will sit up with them!" "But you will certainly sleep!" "I shall not sleep, your Honour!" "Parole d'honneur?" "Parole d'honneur, your Honour!" And, chased by the uneasiness of her Honour, I went up to them, before the company had separated, well supplied with packets of plaster, bottles of drops, and sweet things.

The little boys were much pleased with the latter, and enchanted that, merely on their account, a light should be kept burning all the night. The adventure of the evening occupied them greatly, and they had never done informing me how the Magister had knocked them, how they had fallen down, and what they felt and thought as the Magister let the tea-kettle fall upon them. Axel thought about the deluge, Claes upon the last judgment. Amid these relations they went to sleep.

At half-past eleven I heard the noise of bells,

horses, and carriages before the house of the Colonel. At twelve o'clock all was still and silent, as well within as without the house.

"Soon will they all be sweetly asleep," thought I, and began by degrees to be indescribably sleepy.

Nothing is more painful than to be alone, to be sleepy and be compelled to keep awake, especially when those for whom one keeps awake snore with all their might; and had I not given my *parole d'honneur* not to close my eyes, I should probably have speedily done so. I knit at my stocking; but was obliged to put it down, because every minute I was nearly pricking my eyes. I read, and did not understand a word which I read. I looked out of the window, gazed upon the moon and thought—on nothing. The wick of my candle grew as big as a lily. I wished to snuff it—I unfortunately snuffed it out.

My part as watcher became by this means more difficult than ever. I endeavoured now to keep myself awake by terror, and wished in the uncertain glimmering of the white stove, to see the ghost of the White Lady. I thought if a cold hand should suddenly seize mine, and a voice should whisper horrible words in my ear, or a bloody form should ascend up from the floor—when suddenly the crowing voice of a cock was heard in a neighbouring yard, which, in connexion with the dawning day, chased away all imaginary spectres.

The melancholy song of two little chimney-sweepers,

who, from the tops of their smoky pleasure-houses saluted the morning, formed the *overture* to the general awaking life.

In the region of the kitchen soon blazed a friendly fire ; coffee diffused its Arabian perfume through the atmosphere of the house ; people moved about in the streets, and through the clear winter-air sounded the musical bells of the churches which invited to morning prayers. The smoke-clouds curled purple-tinted up to the bright blue heaven, and with joy I saw at length the beams of the sun, which first greeted the vane and stars of the church towers, and afterwards spread their mantles of light over the roofs of the dwellings of man.

The world around me opened bright eyes ; I thought about closing mine ; and as glad voices greeted me with “ good morning,” I replied, half asleep, “ good night.”

PART II.

DINNER. RAGOUT OF MANY THINGS.

THE wedding-day—has also a morrow!—a wearisome day in the bridal house! Of all the festivity of the preceding day one has only that which remains of an extinguished light—*the fume*. And when from the familiar circle of home, together with all festal sounds and habiliments, has vanished also a friendly countenance (one of the star-lights of its heaven), then it is not extraordinary that its horizon is cloudy;—yes, my little Julie, I thought it quite natural that thou gottest up and went about all day like a rain-cloud, whilst thy brother was not unlike a tempest, as he wandered from one room to another humming the “songs of the stars,” which was horrible to hear.

Everybody had agreed that the new-married pair would pass this day with Algernon’s old grandmother, who lived quite retired from the world, with her maid, her cat, her weak eyes, and her human love, which occasioned her to wish that nobody should ever marry,—which pious wish she had even expressed to

her grandson and Emilia, but in vain. She had, in the mean time, spite of her vexation, wished to see the young couple at her house, and had herself, as report said, peeled the apples for the apple-cake which was to crown the conclusion of the frugal dinner. The day afterwards we were to see them with us, and the next we were to pass with them.

In the mean time we spent the day after the bridal in a sort of stupid quietness. Her Honour ate the whole day nothing but thin water gruel.

After we had brought this heavy day to an end, and every one had betaken himself to his chamber, Julie felt a lively need to animate herself a little; she sent for walnuts, came into my room and sat down to crack them, and to praise her bridegroom.

“How incomparably charming he is! So regular, so sensible, so even in temper, so pleasant, so—so order—(a delicate nut!)—so attentive, so prudent, so regular in his affairs—not niggardly either—so good—not too good either—so—so altogether just what he should be!”

I nodded my approval of all this, wishing Julie much happiness, and—yawned quite indescribably. There are perfections which put one to sleep.

The next day we had a little fresher wind. The newly-married came to dinner. A cap suits Emilia excellently; she was gentle, pleasant, amiable, but not exactly gay; whilst, on the contrary, Algernon was unusually cheerful, animated and talkative. This

annoyed and vexed Julie; she looked at them alternately, and knew not exactly where she was. The domestics put themselves to infinite pains to call Emilia "her Honour." This new appellation did not seem to give her any pleasure; and when an old faithful servant said to her for the seventh time, "Sweet Miss—ah, Lord Jesus!—her Honour," Emilia said, somewhat impatiently and weariedly,— "Dear me, let it be: it is not really so important." The servants presented no dish to her at table without making it very formidable with their question—"Does your Honour please?" "Yes, yes, the fellow knows his world," remarked the Colonel. Emilia looked as if she found that world not at all agreeable.

Full of anxiety of heart, Julie took her sister after dinner into another room, threw herself on her knees before her, and, clasping her arms around her, exclaimed with tears, "Emilia, how is it? Sweet Emilia! Lord God—thou art not happy—thou lookest—dejected! Art thou not satisfied? Art thou not happy?"

Emilia embraced her sister warmly, and said, consolingly, but with tears in her gentle eyes:

"I ought to be, indeed, sweet Julie; Algernon is so good, so noble—I must be happy with him."

But Julie, like all persons of lively tempers, was not satisfied with this. "I ought to be!" She wished for "I am," and considered it quite desperate, unheard of, and unnatural, that a young wife should

not be indescribably happy. *She had read novels.* She conducted herself through the remainder of the day stiffly towards Algernon, who did not seem to trouble himself particularly about it.

When Emilia, with tearful eyes, had again parted from her home, Julie gave full scope to her displeasure, and highly enraged herself against Algernon, who could be so well pleased and merry whilst Emilia was so dejected; he was an icicle, a savage, a heathen, a ——. N.B. The Colonel and her Honour were not present during this philippic; the Cornet, again, took another view of the affair—was displeased with Emilia, who, he thought, required quite too much from her husband. “Had not he, poor fellow, to spring up and look for her work-basket? Did he not put on her fur shoes, her shawl, her cloak? And did she once thank him?” Julie took her sister’s part, the Cornet, Algernon’s; the spirit of controversy threw already one and another bitter seed into the dispute; and the good brother and sister might, perhaps, have remained at variance had not they, as they both stooped to pick up Helena’s needle, knocked their heads together, the shock of which ended the contention by a burst of laughter; and the question of the rights of man and woman—that sea, upon whose billows the two disputants found themselves unexpectedly betrayed, was quickly given up.

The next day was consolatory for Julie. Emilia was gayer and happier to receive her parents and her

brother and sisters in her own home, busied herself with the most unconstrained grace, with the warmest cordiality, to entertain them well. All the Colonel's favourite dishes were on the table, and Emilia's eyes gleamed with joy as her father desired to be helped a second time to turtle soup, adding that it was "outrageously good!" Her Honour was not a little pleased with the excellence and good order of the dinner, as well as with all the arrangements overhead. She blinked, to be sure, a little uneasily at a pudding, one side of which seemed to be somewhat *rainous*; but Julie turned round the dish unobservedly, and her Honour, being near-sighted, believed that the fault lay in her own eyes, and was quiet.

Emilia had the deportment of a *housewife*, and it became her infinitely well. The Cornet was charmed with his sister, and with every thing that surrounded her in her new home; every thing spoke Swedish, thought he; sofas, and chairs, and tables, and curtains, and porcelain, and so on. There was nothing foreign; and it was precisely this, according to his opinion, which made one feel so comfortable and so much at home.

Julie was much pleased with Algernon, who, if he did not exactly make much of his young wife, yet either was beside her, or continually followed her with his loving eyes; one saw plainly how his soul surrounded her, and Emilia cast many bright and friendly glances to unite themselves with his.

How good the coffee tastes when there is snow falling without, and there is the air of summer within. That we ladies all found, as we, in the afternoon, assembled around a blazing fire, enjoying the Arabian bean, had a long and cheerful conversation, during which Emilia talked of the domestic institutions and arrangements which she thought of making, that she might bring comfort and good order into her home; and of which she had in part talked, and should further talk of, with her—her husband. (This little word caused Emilia some little difficulty in the utterance); and see! it was all quite prudent, quite good, quite to the purpose. We proved all, accurately and maturely, between the coffee-cups and the blazing of the fire; we added to, and took from; and could not, however, find out anything much better than that which Emilia had herself devised.

The family is, at the same time, like a poem and a machine. Its poetry or song of the feelings, which streams through, and unites, one with another, all its members; which twines flower-wreaths around the thorny crowns of life, and brightens with the green of hope “the naked rocks of reality,” therewith every human heart is acquainted. But the machinery (without whose well-directed movements *l’opera della vita*, however, remains a fragment without support) many regard as not essential, and neglect it. And yet this part of the institution of domestic life is not the least important to its harmonious progress. It is with

this machinery as with the clock. Are all wheels, springs, and so on, well arranged? It needs merely that the pendulum swing and all is set in proper motion, which goes on as if of itself, with order, and the golden finger of peace and prosperity points out the hours upon the clear face.

Emilia felt this; and she was determined from the beginning, so to arrange her home and her household, that they, spite of the little accidental blows and knocks of fate, should stand to the end, till the weight had run down.

One great and important thing towards the accomplishment of this end, is the prudent and exact management of money matters in housekeeping. In Emilia's case, this was put upon a good and rational footing. From the great common purse there branched out and arranged themselves, various little purses, which, like brooks flowing from one and the same fountain considerably towards various quarters, made the household plantations fruitful.

Emilia was to receive annually, for her own particular expenditure, a certain sum, which she should devote to her own dress and other little purposes, which were not to come into the household register. And as her dress was always to continue simple and tasteful as it had hitherto been, so she would be able to spend a great part of this money to gladden her own heart. Guess, or *say* in what manner, dear reader—you know how.

A woman ought to have her own purse, great or small, whichever it may be. Ten, fifty, a hundred, or a thousand dollars, according to circumstances, but her own, for which she accounts to—herself. Would you know “why,” you gentlemen who make your wives render an account of pins and farthings? Why most especially and particularly, for your own sublime peace and prosperity. You do not think so? Well, then. A maid-servant knocks down a tea-cup, a servant breaks a glass, or suddenly tea-pot, cup, and glass, all at once fall in pieces, and *nobody* has broken them; and so on. The wife who has not her own purse, but who must replace the cups and glass, goes to her husband, relates the misfortune, and begs for a little to make good the damage. He scolds the servants, his wife, who ought to look after the servants. “Money, indeed!—a little money—money does not grow out of the ground, nor yet is it rained down from heaven—many small brooks make a great river.” And such like. At last he gives a little money, and remains often in a very ill humour.

Again, if the wife have her own little purse, then such little vexations never come near him. Children, servants, misfortune, remain the same; but no disorder is remarked; all is made right as at first; all is in order; and the head of the house, who, perhaps, with the greatest ease, could lay down a thousand rixdollars at once, need not for a few pence, squeezed out at different times, lose the equipoise of his tem-

per, which is as invaluable to the whole house as to himself.

And dost thou reckon as nothing, thou unfeeling nabob, those little surprises, those little birthday and namesday pleasures, with which thy wife can give herself the delight of surprising thee—those thousand small pleasures which, unexpected as falling stars, gleam, like them, on the heaven of home, and which must all come to thee from the affection of thy wife, through—a *little money*, which thou must give to her in the gross, in order to receive again in the small, with rich interest of comfort and happiness.

Now, is it clear yet? Algernon had long seen this, and that operated greatly on Emilia's future happiness.

To every true woman's heart it is indescribably delightful *to give*,—to feel itself alive in the satisfaction and happiness of others;—it is the sunshine of the heart, and is more needed here in the cold North perhaps than elsewhere. Besides this, a little freedom is so refreshing.

But where was I just now? Ah! taking coffee with Emilia. Thence go we upon the wings of time to undertake a longer journey.

He who undertakes to relate histories with the pen, must take good care how he husbands the reader's patience. Sometimes he can very well give an account of to-day, of to-morrow, and the next day; but on other occasions he must lump together time and circumstance, if he do not wish that the reader shall

lump together his book, and jump from the fifth to the eighth chapter. Highly important is it that it should not be so with my honourable family; so I hasten to take a little leap over probably three months, and only shortly to put together how my H—— friends passed them.

Julie and her bridegroom passed them in walking. Every day, when the weather permitted it, they went down the whole length of Queen-street, exchanged greetings and talked with acquaintance, noticed figures and dresses amid the pleasant consciousness how handsome and distinguished their own were. Sometimes they went to a shop and bought trifles, or ate a tart at Berndt's, which was often "dreadfully delicious." In the evenings there was a supper somewhere, or an exhibition somewhere, or a ball somewhere,—and this always furnished a subject for the next day; so that, thank heaven! the betrothed had no lack of conversation. Besides this, Lieutenant Arvid, who had everywhere entrance into the *great* world, had always something *small* to relate—some anecdote of the day, some word of this and this about that and that; and so it was all very amusing—thought Julie.

The Cornet had taken an odd fancy. He had set himself to study. Studied the science of war, of mathematics, history, etc., and discovered more and more that as his bodily eyes were formed to look in all directions over the earth and up to heaven, so also was his spiritual eye designed to look into the king-

doms of nature and science, and to acknowledge the light of heaven in these. It was peculiar, that the more he learned to see, the darker he became. He had dread of and for spectres! Yes, gentlemen, it is actually true, and the spectre which he feared has been from time immemorial known in the world under the name of *Ignorance*, an extraordinarily fat lady, dressed in a shining white stuff; *Self-sufficiency*, her long-necked daughter, who always went and trod in the footsteps of her sweet mamma; and *Boasting*, who might be the ghost of an old French language-master, who during his lifetime was related to this lady, and often was seen in company with her.

For the rest, he sought gladly the company of older and more learned men; was much at home with his father and with Helena, and often let his young gentlemen acquaintances knock and shake his bolted door in vain. Sometimes, nevertheless, he would be in doubt whether he should not open it, because he thought—"Perhaps my good friends come to repay me my money;" but then he considered to himself and thought again, "then they would not shake the door so stoutly," and remained quiet. The Cornet had two young friends for whom, at a given sign, his door always flew open. These young men formed a noble triumvirate. Their watchword, in time of war as in peace, was, "Forwards! March!"

Emilia and Algernon made a journey in the beginning of April to Blekinge, where, on a large estate, an old aunt and godmother of Emilia's lived. Emilia

received immediately after her marriage a letter from her, in which she begged Emilia and her husband to visit her as soon as possible. She had lately lost her only child, a son, and wished now, at the age of sixty, to gladden, or rather to reanimate, her heart, by giving it something else to love, to live for. She desired the new-married pair to spend the spring and summer with her; she spoke of neighbours, and of various good and pleasant things which could make their summer residence agreeable. She mentioned that she should make her will; that her property would be theirs after her death, if they would regard her as a mother.

“Upon my word a beautiful letter!” said Uncle P——. “Set off straight there at once, Nephew, with your wife—have the horses put to the carriage immediately. I wish I were in your clothes, you lucky fellow! Wait till the beginning of April?—Madness! What, and if the old lady should die in the mean time? Sir, that is what one may call sleeping over one’s luck! I would take care that it did not happen to me!—Dear Julie, wake me when the coffee comes in.”

When the travelling-carriage stood before the door, and the weeping Emilia sate beside Algernon exchanging tearful heartfelt glances and anxious adieus with her parents and family, who stood around the carriage, Algernon seized her hand and inquired, “Would’st thou now rather remain here with these, or accompany me?”

“Accompany thee,” replied Emilia gently.

“With thy whole heart?”

“With my whole heart!”

“Drive off!” exclaimed Algernon gaily.

“Emilia, we accompany each other on the journey—
through life!”

The carriage rolled away. O that the carriage of every marriage swung upon such springs!

Quietly and sadly did the blind girl pass her dark days; her health visibly declined. Her soul resembled the fires in a charcoal-heap; its flames appear not, do not burst forth, but consume their dwelling silently and surely. In song alone did she at times utter forth her feelings, and when she believed herself to be alone she composed both words and music—which bore the stamp of an unhappy and unquiet heart. In company she spoke scarcely a word, and only her incessant occupation of twisting around her hands and fingers a ribbon or a cord, betrayed the restless disquiet of her heart.

There is in woman a state of mind which operates by causing to do well whatever she does in her domestic circle; which causes a quiet peace to attend her, like that of a pleasant spring day; that where she lingers, lingers also a prosperity and a well-being which she imparts to every one who approaches her; this state of mind proceeds from a pure, god-fearing and devoted heart. Happy, happy above all others

(however in other respects richly gifted) who is possessed of this! And happy was Helena, for it was she who was thus richly gifted. In a letter which she wrote at this time to a friend, she painted vividly herself her happy condition.

“Thou askest what I do?” wrote she at the conclusion of the letter, “I enjoy life in every moment of it. My parents, my family, my work, my books, my flowers, the sun, the stars, heaven and earth: all give me joy, all make me feel the indescribable joy of happiness and of existence. Thou askest me what I do when dark thoughts and doubts seize upon my soul. I have them not—for I trust in God; I love him, I hope in him. I have no cares or anxious fears, for I know that he will make all right—that sometime all will be good and bright. Thus thinking, thus feeling, I must indeed be happy——”

“*Curro, curri, currum, currere,*” repeated the little Dumplings. “*Cururri, cursum, currere,* you little sinners!” corrected the Magister; and thereon they honestly spent (I never exaggerate!) nearly three months.

“It goes on slowly,—but it goes on safely,” said the Magister consolingly, and full of consolation, to her Honour.

Her Honour—God bless her excellent Honour!—but could it only have been managed that for her our flight into the country had been without so much

trouble, so many an “ah! ho!” and so many packages and so many trunks! The Colonel said, half in joke, a little word on this subject.

“That is easily said,” replied Her Honour, gravely.

The Cornet, who could not bear the least remark about his mother, in whose proceeding and action he would never see the least fault, held by her in all her trouble, and contradicted us, who thought it a little unnecessary; and when she was altogether too much put out of sorts, he went about singing “God save the King” (the only English which he knew), in order to withdraw our attention from her Honour.

A month before and a month after the removal, she wearied herself and worked for our good, and on the day of the journey itself—O heavens!

What packing and pitching,
In cellar and kitchen!
In parlour and hall
All the things have a ball,
And wherever we tread
Things turn heels over head.
And gentlefolks ringing,
And servants off springing.

Guests come, and breakfasts and trunks in array,
All throng about us and all must have way.
Of friendship they talk, goose and beefsteak attack,
And up go the mouths all—and up goes the pack;
The lady smiles, groans, and then sighs forth “Good lack!”

Quick the travelling time comes,
The alarum drum booms.

Thus hurrying, thus hurrying—run hither and hither!
“Drive onward! drive onward! the mantles bring hither!”

Such packing and stowing
Reminds me of going;

and going to——

THORSBORG :

THE paternal estate of the Colonel, where we arrived in the middle of May.

HAD I a drop of the vein which sprung forth from Sir Walter Scott's inkstand, spread itself through "all lands," and has wetted with historical-antiquarian ink the pens of hundreds of authors, then would I give in this place a magnificent description of the stately castle of Thorsborg, built during the Thirty Years' War by a high-minded and nobly descended lady in nine months' time, with walls as firm as the minds of those times, and with leaded window panes, as small as the rays of light which emanated in those days from the cloisters. I would tell how Mrs. Barbro Åkesdotter, of Göholm and Hedesö, wife of the Admiral Stjernbjelke (whose portrait is to be seen at Thorsborg, and shews her to be a proud and dignified woman), in order to surprise her husband, then fighting for the cause of freedom in Germany, she raised this noble building upon the height where it now stands in princely grandeur, commanding immeasurable fields and meadows, to an extent of many miles; and how

she, on the arrival of her hero at the home of his fathers, had burning lights placed in all the windows of the castle, in order to delight and charm his eyes I would also whisper that this was not successful, and that tradition says that he was exceeding angry at Mrs. Barbro's handiworks. I would further relate somewhat of the fate of the successors who afterwards lived upon the estate, of whom one, who was gifted with the power of a skald, scratched upon a pane of glass in the castle saloon, and which, in the time of Colonel H——, was still to be seen, the following distich, as a memorial of themselves, and for our edification :

“ Miss Sigrid with her Soop,
Are both great fools.”

And if I had descended down the stream of time, from the burnt-out volcanoes of the Middle Ages to the calm places of rest of our days, I would, wandering among these, searching among the remains of the lava-streams, and after the extinguished fires collected in the urns of memory, scatter them through these pages, and—that is to say (to talk a little less flowery) I would speak about all the old armour, helmets and spears, which still are preserved at Thorsborg, and which Cornet Carl embraced with particular tenderness; of the bloody dresses, swords, murder-balls, and such like; and mention among the peaceful remembrances, the doors, overlaid with a thousand wooden figures, of the sleeping-room of

Gustavus Adolphus the Second, which were removed here from the more ancient castle; of the immeasurable saloon with its floor of oak laid chequer-wise, and the oak spars of its roof; of the portrait of Mrs. Barbro, as she sits with her trowel in her hand; of her spinning-wheel, etc.; and, in order not to forget salt to the soup, would I forget to relate of the spectral apparitions which occur in the castle, and which nobody was so liable to perceive as the Magister. He often heard terrible sounds—a mixture of the clangour of the trumpet and the howl of the wolf; he heard how at night time there was a soft moving about in the billiard-hall; how the balls rattled; small bells were rung, and so on. I would relate how the people in the house knew about one ghost, which walked without a head in the great oak saloon in moonlight evenings; and how very often, amid dark nights, lights suddenly beamed from all the windows; and how there was nobody who had not heard sofas, tables, and chairs dragged with a terrible noise up and down the room where nobody was; and that even her Honour—Hu! but I begin to be horrified myself; and I now see clearly how I have only ability with common ink to write about common and every-day things; and therefore find it more safe and agreeable to tell how the little Dumplings, happy beyond all description to be in the country, leapt about, and dug among the ditches and heaps of stones, where were the ruins of the old house, sought for

treasures and found—primroses. How Julie herself, like a butterfly, sprang after her winged sister beings, defying her bridegroom to run in pursuit of her, until she observed that it was not worth her trouble, for he did not exert himself at all. “It was too warm.”

He liked, above all things, to sit upon a soft sofa with his little bride, comfortably resting upon the softly swelling cushion, in a sort of inward observation of life’s—easy side. In the mean time he busied himself with hunting alternately on the Colonel’s estate and that of his own father. His father was a cheerful, good-hearted, grey-headed man, who esteemed highly five things on earth; namely, his old noble name, his son, the friendship of Colonel H——, his set of white horses called “swans,” and his tobacco-pipe, for the lighting of which an incessant fire burnt, both winter and summer, in his stove. He was enchanted with his little daughter-in-law elect, who, however, played him many a little trick, over which he was just as easily made angry as he was easily put into good humour again. He related histories willingly, exaggerated prodigiously, swore boldly, and was, after all, that which people called *a man of honour*.

At Thorsborg the family soon fell into a quiet and cheerful way of life. Her Honour went about, to be sure, with her bunch of keys and her troubles, but allowed nobody to disturb themselves on that ac-

count; and so intrinsically good was she, that she never annoyed or made any one uneasy but herself.

The evenings were especially agreeable. When we were all assembled in a little green boudoir, rich with pictures and flowers, and where the reading of the works of Franzén, Tegnér, Stagnelius, Sjöberg, Nicander, and many other Swedish poets, which Professor L——'s expressive eloquence and excellent declamation taught us more to value, and made us every day richer in noble and fresh thoughts and feelings. Frequently, also, there was reading of a more serious kind; that, namely, whose object it is to diffuse clearness upon subjects of the highest importance to the human heart—on God and immortality. This, I soon observed, was done with an especial reference to the blind girl, upon whose marble-pale countenance the looks of the Colonel always lingered during the reading of those passages where the rays of divinity penetrated most clearly and most warmly, although through the veil of human weakness. Often, too, were the evenings spent in conversations on the same subjects. Professor L——, the Colonel, and Helena, took the principal part in these. The measures taken by the Colonel, in common with the Professor, for the moral improvement of his dependents, by good schools and other establishments, which were intended as much for their benefit as their enjoyment, gave an unconstrained occasion for these conversations. The human being

—his organisation—his education—his dignity—his weakness—the ennobling of humanity through a rightly preaching of a rightly understood gospel—this life in connexion with the future;—these were subjects which were handled by Professor L—— with the greatest warmth, beauty, clearness, and power. His fervid and powerful eloquence, which expressed so excellently his rich feelings—the happy ability, which he possessed in an admirable manner, of giving clearness even to the most abstract ideas, by examples drawn from the riches of history, morals, and nature—the calm, beautiful wisdom, which was the result of his learning, and the beneficial strength of which irresistibly passed to the hearts of all his auditors—the fine tone of his manly voice, the dignity and expressiveness of his features—all this caused people to listen to him with delight for whole hours. And when, as he went deeper into his subject, he expressed himself with an ever-increasing warmth, with a more forcible utterance, expressed more lofty and profound ideas, people felt themselves, as it were, lifted from the earth and brought nearer to heaven. It was an apotheosis of thought and feeling, and the heavenward journey of the moment left always behind it in our hearts a living spark of the eternal fire.

It was during these evenings that I saw feelings of a higher and nobler kind arise in the hitherto somewhat childish and volatile Julie. I saw her breast

heave, her cheeks crimson, whilst she listened to the conversations on truth and virtue; and her expressive eyes dwelt on the lips of the noble interpreter, as if to draw in every word; and she answered her bridegroom shortly and with indifference, as he sometimes would solicit her judgment on pretty little paper things and cuttings-out, in which accomplishment he possessed a real talent.

The blind girl remained silent during these conversations, and rarely did any movement in her statue-like countenance betray the feelings which stirred within her.

We had also in the evenings conversations of another kind—of a light, but, nevertheless, of an important nature. In these, Cornet Carl and her Honour took part. One evening, as Professor L—— and the Colonel were absent, Lieutenant Arvid gave a long lecture on the best mode of cooking reindeer flesh, and on the sauce thereto. Julie inquired whether Arvid's speech did not give us a great appetite to eat an early supper, and go quickly to bed. Universal applause.

One day, as Julie and I sate at an open window and worked—a pot of Provence roses standing upon the table between us—and we had long sate silent, Julie said all at once, quite hastily, “Do you not think?”—and was still again.

I looked up at her, and asked “What then?”

“Yes—that—that Professor L—— has something

very noble in his countenance, and particularly in his brow."

"Yes," I replied, "one reads there his noble soul, his mild wisdom."

Julie smelled at the Provence rose—its buds seemed to have blossomed upon her cheeks.

"Aha!" thought I.

Again Julie asked, "Do you not think?"——
New pause.

"That Prof——," said I, leading the way.

"Yes—that—that Professor L—— has a fine voice, and that he talks most excellently? He makes every thing so clear, so rich, so beautiful. One feels oneself better whilst one hears him."

"That is true. But do you not think that Lieutenant Arvid has very handsome moustaches, very handsome teeth, and a particularly handsome voice, especially when he says "the thousand fet——"

"Now you are malicious, Beata," said Julie hastily, reddening, as she sprung up and ran away. In going past him, she woke Lieutenant Arvid, who, upon a sofa in the next room, was taking his after-dinner nap; upon which he grumbled a little, and demanded, whilst he leisurely stretched out his arms and legs—a kiss in compensation.

He received—"Yes, indeed; pish!"

In the mean time, Julie became more serious every day; her temper, hitherto so constantly cheerful and good, began to be irregular, and sometimes unfriendly;

her demeanour became more still and grave, and sometimes a faint expression of melancholy dwelt upon her charming countenance. For a long time, however, none of her family remarked this change; every member of which had much of his own to look after.

Her Honour, whose lively nature and active goodness always kept her in motion, had in the country every hour occupied. She was the comforter, the counsellor, and teacher, in great as well as in small; and besides this, she was the physician of the whole neighbourhood. She was all this, with an ease and a possession of mind which one could hardly have expected from her, in seeing her troubled manner on occasions of the least perplexity in her own home and household. She herself went about to people with medicines and encouragement, soup and good counsel; and the first gave substance and force to the latter. She was the darling of the whole district; old and young, rich and poor, praised her as “so very good and condescending!”

The Colonel occupied himself apparently in a more passive manner; but, in fact, was more actively busied about the welfare of those over whom he had power. He was to his dependents, as well as his domestic servants, a good and just, but strict ruler. He was generally more feared than loved; but every one acknowledged that, during the time the property had been in his hands, depravity of manners, drunken-

ness, and crime of all kinds, had decreased every year; and, on the contrary, order, honesty, morality, social intercourse, and their consequences, prosperity and contentedness, advanced more and more, even to neighbouring places; and the excellent institutions which he formed, the good schools which he established, and which every year made more perfect, gave hope of the increasing cultivation and happiness of the rising generation. Professor L—— stood now at his side as a powerful coadjutor.

This is the place to say a word of explanation regarding Professor L——. It shall be short and good.

Professor L—— was the son of a man of property, and was himself in very good circumstances. He had become a clergyman, in order to be, according to his opinion, the most useful to his fellow creatures. He was, in the most beautiful signification, the father of his parish.

Remarkable is it that he, next to me, and perhaps more than me, paid attention to Julie. His eye followed her often, so kindly serious, so searching——

Helena had the oversight of the parish girls' school, which important office she filled excellently, and with as much pleasure as care.

The Cornet had——oversight of the boys' school?— Does anybody perchance believe it? No, heaven forfend! and that was well, both for him and the school. He had suddenly taken a violent passion for

botany; went out early in a morning, remained often abroad the whole day, and came home in the evening quite wearied, with pockets full of weed——plants, I will say. He talked a deal about the interest of botany, of its benefit and usefulness; shewed Julie incessantly the difference between a pentandria and an octandria, etc. In particular was he bent upon finding the *Linnea Borealis*, which he had been told grew in the neighbourhood, but could not discover. This he now went out to seek both early and late.

“It is very queer with Carl,” said Julie, “when he comes home from his botanical rambles; either he is so joyous that he is ready to embrace everybody, or he looks so cross as if he were ready to bite.”

“He is too much taken up with his botany,” said the Colonel.

Helena smiled and shook her head—and so did I—and so wouldst thou also, my young reader. I guess that thou guessest that he—but hush, hush as long—do not let us betray the secret which will come in proper time to light. In the mean time, we drive in the great family carriage to make—

VISITS.

THE Colonel, her Honour, Julie, the Cornet, and I. Her Honour, who sometimes had ideas which seemed to have fallen from the moon, had lately come upon the notion that I began to be melancholy; which proceeded, she fancied, from my having beaten my brains over the Book of the Revelations, because she had found me a few times with the Bible in my hands open at the last page, where the coming of the New Jerusalem is described. Now her Honour was afraid of nothing so much as of beating one's brains over books; she half believed that my reason was in danger, and in order to divert me, and to draw me a little from "such things," she was altogether determined that I should accompany her on the visits which were to be made in the neighbourhood.

We set off one beautiful afternoon, and all of us in good humour.

We drank coffee with Mrs. Mellander, who, together with her husband (the appendage of his wife), rented a little place from the Colonel. Mrs. Mellander was uncommonly ugly; marked by the small-pox, and

had a bearded chin; carried her nose very high over her silent, worthy husband, who deeply acknowledged her power, and talked about good breeding and morality the whole day long to her two handsome but somewhat awkward daughters, whom the Cornet likened to weeping birches. For the rest she was neat, orderly, and domestic; kept in good order her husband, her daughters, a maid-servant, and three cats, and believed herself therefore to have an excellent head for government.

“Yes, yes!” said she once, sighing, “now people say Count Platen is dead; next year they will perhaps say Mrs. Mellander is dead.”

“That would indeed be dreadful,” said the Colonel, who was present.

Whilst Mr. Counsellor Mellander led the Colonel down into the little orchard to shew him a newly laid out, or, as he called it, a newly broken up piece of land in an old potatoe field, we began to hear every kind of news from Mrs. Mellander. First, that she had read a very entertaining book about a young fellow who was called Fritz.

“Is it a romance?” asked her Honour.

“Yes, it is a romance. It is very amusing. She whom Fritz loved is called Ingeborg.”

“Who wrote the book?” again asked her Honour.

“Yes, that I do not know. He must be a clergyman. And it stands there so beautifully how they voyage over the seas, and how she claps her small white hands.”

"Can it be Frithiof?" exclaimed the Cornet, perfectly screaming with pure astonishment.

"Frithiof—yes, Fritz, or Frithiof, so was he called."

"By Tegnér!" exclaimed her Honour quietly.

"Ten——yes, yes, some such a name have I heard."

Julie lifted her eyes up to heaven.

Her Honour, who at the first moment looked as if it were desirable to turn the conversation from such a subject, now asked Mrs. Mellander whether she had heard that the Countess B—— had removed from her estate.

"No!" replied Mrs. Mellander sharply, and with decision, "I know nothing about her. Between us there is no longer any intercourse. Would you think it, your Honour, that she and I were brought up together? Yes—we were in our childhood together every day; and I had a straw hat with red ribbon, and I said to her, 'listen, Jeannette,' and she said to me, 'listen, Lisette,' and we were the best friends in the world. Then she went on her way, and I went on mine—to my uncle, Counsellor Stridsberg, at Norrtelge. Your Honour knows him certainly?"

"No!" replied her Honour.

"The cross! not know the rich Stridsberg—he married Mamsell Bredström, daughter of shopkeepe Bredström in Stockholm, your Honour knows really—brother-in-law to Lönquist—who lives in the Packar-market."

“I do not know,” replied her Honour, smiling and half embarrassed.

“Indeed—indeed!” said Mrs. Mellander, somewhat displeased, and perhaps with lessened esteem for her Honour’s acquaintance. “Yes,” said she, continuing her relation, “and thus it happened that we did not see one another for several years. But then, when I was married to Mellander, I went to a concert in Stockholm, and there saw my old youthful friend, who had now become the Countess B——. And I bowed and bowed to her—but what do you think? She looked point-blank at me and never moved again, and acted exactly as if she did not recognise me. “Aha!” thought I. “Now, however, when she drives past my house in her country carriage, she puts her head out of the window and bows and nods. But—I knit. What does your dear Honour think?”

That which her dear Honour thought, however, Mrs. Mellander did not know this time; for in the same moment came in her dear better-half, together with the Colonel, who mentioned our setting off, as the clock had already struck five, and we had almost seven miles to drive to Löfstaholm, where we had to make our next visit, to the Ironfounder D——. In the mean time every one of the company must take two cups of coffee, with the exception of the Cornet, who, cursing Mrs. Mellander, her good intention and her coffee, resolutely declined. He and Julie had during this time done their best to enliven and

amuse the two Mamselles Eva and Amalia. The Cornet said to them, in his gay good humour, all kind of little polite things. Julie praised their flowers, promised to lend them books, patterns, etc., which had the effect of making the handsome weeping birches, as if shaken by a brisk wind, or enlivened by a beneficial rain, lift up by degrees their branches, and move their leaves; that is to say, Amalia and Eva were quite lively, and their eye-balls turned both to east and west.

At Löfstaholm were the Colonel and his family received with the liveliest and most noisy joy. In an especial manner was great attention shewn to Cornet Carl, who, for his generous deportment, his lively temper, together with his merry fancies, was universally beloved and thought much of by the neighbours, and was in especial favour at Löfstaholm, where balls, theatricals, and pleasures of all kinds were perpetually alternating, and where he had danced now with twelve ladies in four-and-twenty dances—by turns as Captain Puff, or Cousin Pastoreau, or as the Burgomaster in Carolus Magnus—and occasioned universal delight. The parts of lovers he had never been able to take, because he had *never been in love*; and, therefore, could not naturally represent that which was contrary to his nature.

In order to celebrate the name-day of the Ironmaster D——, his three talented daughters, and his four talented sons, gave on this evening a little con-

cert, to which a tolerably large company of listeners had been invited, and to which now the H—— family made a welcome five.

Mrs. D——, whom report called a very accomplished lady, who talked of Weber and Rossini, of education and accomplishment, poetry, colouring, taste, tact, and so on, made therefore a flowery speech to her Honour about her views of education, and of a system which had laid the foundation of that which she had given to her children, and without which, both Weber and Rossini, accomplishment, taste, and tact, would move themselves with any tact.

At the beginning of the concert, Eleonora D—— bashfully and blushing seated herself at the piano-forte and played "*Con tutta la forza della disperazione.*" In every accord which she struck, she gave to the ears of the auditors two or three notes into the bargain; and the shakes, thanks to the bass-pedal and fermaté, went over the keys like a dash of India-rubber over a drawing. The close produced much effect—the whole piano thundered. After this, the blue-eyed Therese sang an Aria out of the Barber of Seville. Magnificent staccato tones, and powerful rolls, as if shook with manual force, and shrill exclamations, drew from the audience the most lively declarations of gratitude for so much—trouble.

The Ironmaster D——, a little fat and merry old man, was fascinated by his children, whom, in his paternal heart, he compared to the Seven Wonders of

the World, and went up during all this to Colonel H——, rubbing his hands, and asking, with flashing eyes, “Now, what thinks my brother? What says my brother? What? What?”

The Colonel, who had in part too good natural taste, and in part had heard too much good music, not quite well to know what he was about, took refuge in his good-humoured arch smile and the two-sided praise, “They play devilishly!” or, “She sings like the thousand!”—which dubious expressions the happy father received with the most lively pleasure.

A duet which succeeded this, between Adolf D—— and one of his sisters, got a little (as the Colonel said) out of joint; and a duet of angry looks took place between the brother and sister; whilst the song, by degrees, again adjusted itself.

The finale, or chorus, which all the seven virtuosos sang together, in which “long life” and “free from strife,” “bowls” and “skåls,” and such like words rhymed, composed, together with the thereto-belonging and preceding row of words, by Adolf D——, would, I thought, have shook down the house.

Her Honour, who during all this sate as if she were at evening service, with a devotional and rather deplorable mien, now did her best to satisfy the musical family’s thirst for praise. The Colonel repeated his words of power, and the company sang a chorus of *bravo!* and *charmant!* which, however, were accompanied by many equivocal looks. This beha-

viour scandalised the Cornet—he had an easy part to act—who could say, and did say it freely, that he did not at all understand anything about music, and could not, therefore, give any judgment upon it. Another, who from his musical knowledge (or for his sins' sake) is called upon to give an opinion, is badly off at such a concert as this. One may condemn artists, for one has purchased the right of doing so; but amateurs one can only praise; that one considers oneself obliged to do; and if one cannot do it with a good conscience, the truth takes its flight not willingly without shewing a sour face.

It was not to be thought of that we should return home before supper. The clock struck eleven before we were again in the carriage. It was a mild, unusually lovely spring night. Her Honour was soon asleep, lulled by the rocking of the carriage and by our conversation. We all grew silent by degrees. The Colonel's countenance was gloomy. The Cornet sate and looked at the moon, which, pale and mild, stood above the green peaceful earth. There was a something enthusiastic in his look, which I had never remarked before. Julie was also full of thought. The coachman and horses must also have thought about something, for we only crept slowly through wood and fields. When we, about midnight, drove past the parsonage, the residence of Professor L——, we saw a light shining in one of the windows. The Colonel saw it, and said, whilst his eyes beamed

kindly, "There, now, sits L——, and wakes and labours for the good of his fellow-creatures. He himself enjoys no nightly repose; and may do so, perhaps, for fifty years or more, before his works will be rightly understood and valued; and such nights succeed to days which are wholly dedicated to the fulfilment of his manifold duties."

"He is like his light," said the Cornet, "he consumes himself to illuminate others."

"He must be a most noble man," said Julie, with a tear in her eye.

"Yes, indeed," said the Colonel, "I know none nobler. But he cannot live long in that way; he kills himself."

"Has he not," asked Julie, "any sister, or a mother, or somebody at home with him, who will look after him, and love him, and value him?"

"No, he is solitary."

"Solitary," repeated Julie, softly and anxiously. Whilst we drove in a half-circle around the parsonage, she leaned out of the carriage-window, and kept her head still turned in one and the same direction.

"What are you looking after, my child?" asked the Colonel.

"After the light, papa—it glimmers so beautifully in the night."

On the following day several visits were to be made in the neighbourhood; but now it was altogether

impossible for the Cornet to accompany us upon these. He had got an intimation that the *Linnæa borealis* was to be found in a woody district about three or four miles east of Thorsborg; and in order to convince himself thereof, it was necessary that he left us before dinner.

“I cannot comprehend,” said Julie, “upon what Carl lives on certain days. He never takes anything with him, however much I may beg of him to do so, whenever he goes on his pilgrim journeys. It seems to me, also, that he gets very thin.”

“Now again he runs to the woods!” said the Colonel, as he saw his son go with great strides across the court. “I fear that his *Linnæa borealis* has turned his head.”

Our visits to-day were less fortunate. At the L——’s of Vik the children had the measles; and, for the sake of our little Dumplings, we posted away, on this news, at full speed.

At M——, the Countess was not at home. In a pleasure-house in the garden sung her canary-birds, hungering in splendid cages; and seemed, by alternately lamenting, alternately joyous quavering notes, both by fair means and foul, to draw attention to their want.

Her Honour gave them seed, water, sugar, bird-grass, and a thousand flattering names.

“With all these,” remarked the Colonel, “we shall not get a cup of tea this afternoon.

Between six and seven o'clock in the afternoon, not to have tea was a great loss to the Colonel; and her Honour, who knew that, sate with a troubled and anxious countenance in the carriage, whilst we turned upon our homeward way, which would require a full half hour. In order to take a shorter cut, as he believed, the coachman drove by a new way, which also brought us acquainted with a new district. We drew up in a wild spot, overgrown with wood, to give the horses breath. To the right, and at no great distance from the carriage, we saw above the tree tops a column of smoke arise, which a gentle wind drove towards us.

"Upon my faith," said the Colonel, "do I not believe that they have tea ready for us there. See, Julie; does there not shine a white wall through the wood?"

"Yes, I see something grey-white; there is actually a house there; the smoke seems to come from it. It is plain that a fairy is waiting for us there to entertain us. *Faeree*, which bids to tea, that rhymes excellently."

"My opinion is," said the Colonel, "that if there be no fairy there, yet there are quite certainly people, and who most surely will bestow tea upon us, if we—What do you think, Charlotte; shall we not pay a visit to that little charming palace in the wood yonder? We will tell the gentlefolks there that we wish to make their acquaintance, and that we—in one word, that we are thirsty."

Julie laughed heartily. Her Honour looked quite horrified.

“My good friend,” said she, “that would never do.”

“It would do for me, charmingly,” said the Colonel, “to get a cup of tea.”

“Besides, sweet mamma,” said Julie, “we might, perhaps, make a very interesting acquaintance. For example, think if Don Quixote did not die of his blood-letting, as people said, but travelled up into the north, and had set himself down here with his handsome Toboso, and received us; or if we should meet with a hermit, who would tell us his history; or a disguised princess ——”

“What and whom you will,” said the Colonel, “if they be only Christian enough to give us a cup of tea.”

As the Colonel now certainly, for the fourth time, had come out with his “cup of tea,” her Honour rebutted so gravely this visit à la Don Quixote, as she called it, that all thoughts of it were given up, and it was determined to continue the drive.

As the carriage was now again set in motion, crack went off one of the hind wheels; the carriage went slowly over, and amid a variety of exclamations we tumbled, the one over the other, down upon the road.

Her Honour lay upon me; but endeavoured, however, before she herself thought of getting up, to draw away her reticule, which by chance was under

me and which I assured her was quite impossible for her to do as long as I was unable to move from the spot.

At length we, every one of us, stood again upon our feet. Her Honour was pale, and we gathered all around her, with fear and anxiety, and asked a thousand questions—"Whether she had struck herself—was much frightened, and such like." But as she replied to all with "No," and as we, to her anxious inquiries about us could also say that we felt neither fright, wounds, nor bruises (of being squeezed I will not speak), Julie burst out into such a hearty and loud fit of laughter that we were compelled to join her. The coachman and servant were both, like us, uninjured, and scratched their heads with troubled faces.

With their assistance, the Colonel now endeavoured to raise the old heavy carriage; but the road consisted of deep sand—the carriage had fallen as good as into a ditch—the coachman was an invalid—the servant an antiquity. They cried out "Eu!—uh!" The Colonel alone worked, and the carriage came not from the spot.

A visit to the grey house (the only human habitation which was visible) was now necessary, and the Colonel, who was so bent upon this visit and his "cup of tea," that he was quite pleased about this affair of the carriage, exclaimed, "We must go altogether in pleasure and need;" offered his wife his arm, and led her, with unusual cheerfulness and merry jokes, along the narrow path, which wound through a thick

spruce and pine wood, and seemed to conduct to the so much talked of grey house.

"It will rain," said her Honour, and looked anxiously up to heaven. "My bonnet!—could we not stop here under the trees, whilst Grönvall runs and fetches people to the carriage?"

"It will not rain," said the Colonel.

"It does rain," said her Honour.

"Let us hasten to get under a roof," said the Colonel, and hurried merrily onward, holding his hat over her Honour's head.

At last we arrived before the little grey house. It had a gloomy and forlorn appearance; and with the exception of a little kitchen garden, all around was wild and uncultivated. The silver waves of a lake glittered at some distance through the dark fir wood.

It began to rain in earnest as we reached the house. A door on the right of the entrance stood a-jar. It led to the sanctuary of the kitchen. As the Colonel entered, a maid-servant started from a corner, like a hare from her form, and fixed upon us her only half-awake grey eyes and stammered forth—"Be so good as to go up stairs—the gentlefolks are at home."

We mounted up a narrow and dark staircase, at the head of which the Colonel opened a door, which gave us a view of a little room filled on all sides with washing. Tables and chairs, as well as baskets, were covered with clothes, partly folded and partly not. The air steamed hotly towards us as if from a heated oven.

"Go on, go on!" said the Colonel, friendly admonishing her Honour, who make a halt on the step.

"My sweet friend, I really cannot go and step into the clothes baskets," replied she a little disturbed. The Colonel and I drew these aside, and we went through the land of clothes to another door, at the opening of which we all stood for a moment in astonishment and surprise.

A perfectly beautiful, majestic lady, dressed magnificently in black silk and lace, stood in the middle of a room, tastefully ornamented with beautiful glass, vases of flowers, mirrors, and other useless things. Somewhat behind her stood, although she seemed to me only to float, a young—yes, actually only a young girl,—but so enchantingly, so angelically beautiful, that one was ready to doubt whether there were anything earthly in her existence. She could not be more than sixteen at the most, had her light hair fastened up with a gold pin, wore a light gauze dress, which surrounded like a bright cloud the lily-white, lovely, ideally beautifully formed angelic being.

The elder lady approached us, whilst her dark blue eyes regarded somewhat proudly and inquiringly the uninvited guests. Her Honour stepped backward and trod upon my toes. The Colonel, whose noble bearing and open, and at the same time cheerful manner made upon every one an agreeable impression, soon called forth an amiable smile upon the lips of the handsome Wood-lady, whilst in a manner at once pleasant and comic he related the cause, or rather the causes of

our unexpected visit; besought forgiveness for it; mentioned his name, which seemed to make an extraordinary impression upon the beautiful unknown, and presented his wife and daughter—me, he forgot. I forgive him. Who talks of the sauce to the goose? It follows of itself, of course, as appendix. The handsome Wood-lady replied in broken Swedish, but with a voice which was actual music. "Very welcome! the carriage shall have help, and we will have tea—as good as I can. My daughter, my Hermina," added she, whilst she pushed back the shadowing curls from the brow of the sylph.

In the mean time her Honour advancing to the sofa, stood and curtsied with great politeness before a gentleman who hitherto had been half concealed by the window-curtains, but who now stepped forward, took the hand of the astonished lady, shook it and kissed it, laughing the while, and saying, not without embarrassment, "Sweet mamma!" It was—the Cornet.

Her Honour said merely, "Good heavens!" and seated herself quite hurriedly and quite confounded upon the sofa, with clasped hands and looks riveted upon her son. The Colonel opened his eyes wide, made a most comical grimace—but said nothing. A sort of embarrassed, uneasy constraint took place in the company. The Cornet, who in particular seemed to stand upon needles, went out to look after the reparation of the carriage.

The handsome Wood-lady went out also, and we remained alone with the sylph, whom the Colonel

observed with apparent delight. He, as well as her Honour and Julie, endeavoured with questions and observations on a variety of subjects to make her talkative, but it did not succeed; she talked only a little, and avoided answering questions. Child-like innocence, inward grace, and an almost heavenly repose, lay in her whole being, and impressed itself upon all which she said. She spoke tolerably good Swedish, but with an accent in which the fine tones of the Italian tongue betrayed itself. Julie was delighted, and ceased not to whisper to me, "She is an angel, an angel! Look at her mouth!—no, look at her little hand,—no, look at her foot—no, look at her eyes!—ah, brother Carl!—now art thou certainly fast!—she is a real angel!"

In that little tastefully ornamented room stood also a harp and a lyre. To Julie's question whether she played upon either of these instruments, she answered by going up to the harp, and playing and singing a canzonetta of Azioli, with a grace and a voice so touchingly sweet that it drew tears from all our eyes.

She had scarcely ended when her mother entered; immediately afterwards came the Cornet and tea. The occupation which this last gave to one and all made the constraint in the conversation less observable, although it did not go on altogether straight forward.

I could not help remarking (one may pardon this in a House-counsellor) the poverty of the tea-service. The cups were of Rörstrand's coarsest porcelain (three

of them were joined), the sugar was common, and very grey lump,—of bread or rusks I saw not a trace.

I feared that our handsome hostess observed that I looked a little about me, and that her Honour also looked a little about her, and glanced with half an eye at me. For her countenance betrayed a painful confusion, whilst she stammered out something about the difficulty of getting white flour. With her willing kindness her Honour offered to send her some from her own store, but received for answer a decided and cold “No, I thank you!” whereupon she was at once discouraged, and rather offended.

The Colonel drank with satisfaction his second cup of tea, when all at once we heard a loud noise, and somebody hastily coming up the stairs. Our hostess crimsoned, turned pale, rose, and made a few steps towards the door, when it was thrown open, and a man with a wild expression of repressed anger in a pale, sternly significant countenance, entered hastily, moved haughtily and negligently to the company whom he found in the room, and went and seated himself in a window, where he remained silent; whilst he cast, nevertheless, wild, angry, and penetrating glances upon our handsome hostess, who, evidently trembling, came silently and reseated herself by her Honour. By degrees, however, her demeanour became calmer, and she answered several times the angry glances which were cast at her with a look full of pride and even disdain.

The Colonel, who measured the newly-arrived with

searching looks, addressed to him a question respecting the weather. At the sound of his voice the Unknown turned himself quickly round, regarded the inquirer keenly, and a pale red tinged his sunken cheeks, as he replied, without seeming to know that which he said, "Yes, yes—it rains no longer—people may go their ways."

He looked again through the window, and repeated, "It clears up—one could go out without any danger."

The Colonel, who on this day seemed to be possessed by the spirit of contradiction, said, against all appearances, for it cleared up every moment, "It changes now;—it clouds over, and begins certainly to rain worse than ever."

Her Honour gave him now a little friendly beseeching glance, and at this silent prayer he rose up, and saw at length that it had cleared up, and that one might "go one's ways."

Amid expressions of gratitude and excuses we made our adieus to the Wood-lady and her daughter, who had large tears in her beautiful eyes when we left the room; silently saluting Mr. Zernebok, as Julie called him, who seemed to wish to shoot us with his eyes, and to help us off.

"You will accompany us, Carl?" said the Colonel to his son; "or do you still think of looking for the *Linnæa bo——*?"

"I shall run and see whether the carriage is in order," returned the Cornet, and was off like a storm-wind.

When we again were seated in the carriage, the Cornet was assailed with questions. He declared that he knew no more of the handsome foreigner than we did: upon one of his rambles into the country he had made her acquaintance—he knew that she was handsome and amiable, lived apart from the whole world, and seemed to be poor—for the rest he knew nothing more—nothing at all.

“Poor!” exclaimed her Honour, “and dressed in that way—such lace!”

The Cornet crimsoned, and merely said—“They are always very well dressed.”

“But who in all the world was the cross gentleman?” asked Julie.

“The gentleman of the house,” answered the Cornet; “he seems to have an unhappy and an irritable temper—for the rest, I do not know this family.”

The Colonel looked sharply at his son, who was evidently embarrassed.

It was silent in the carriage. Her Honour nodded her head as an accompaniment to her own thoughts.

Once the Colonel interrupted the silence, as he said smiling good-humouredly, “I have yet her ‘*cling, cling,*’ in my ears.”

“*Kling, kling,*” repeated the Cornet, reddening.

“Yes, yes!” replied the Colonel, dryly, and it was again silent.

Julie had, it is true, her heart and her eyes full of animated words about the two handsome foreigners, but she did not rightly know upon what ground she

stood with regard to her brother's acquaintance with them, and besides that, seldom ventured in the presence of her father to give vent to her raptures, from dread of his sarcastic looks, of which she had a panic-terror.

"It is extraordinary," said the Colonel again, "that exactly in that woody region, east of Thorsborg, the rare *Linnæa* bo——."

"Do you not think, papa," interrupted the Cornet, hastily, "that I should close the window; or perhaps papa should not talk just now—so much—the cold mist comes in."

"Thanks for your care, my son; there is no danger for me. I fear more for you—that you may have caught some malady on your botanical excursions—that you have taken cold—have the ague."

"The ague!" said the Cornet laughing, but reddening at the same time, "one might rather talk about a fever ——"

"I will be your doctor," said the Colonel; "and as I see already considerable symptoms, I order you——"

"Thanks most humbly, my best papa! But there is now no danger at all—that I assure you. Besides which, I have much——respect for medicines."

The Colonel was silent. Her Honour sighed. Julie cast roguish glances at me. The carriage drew up, we were at home. It was already quite late in the evening.

During supper the Colonel said to his son, "Now

Carl, when were you so fortunate as to meet with your *Linnæa borealis*?"

The Cornet answered briskly, "Exactly to-day, papa!" and taking out his pocket-book, drew from it a little plant, saying, "this little northern flower, which, with the exception of Sweden and Norway, is found only in Switzerland and upon a mountain in America, has a most remarkable smell, particularly in the night time. It has already begun to dry, but it smells well yet—does it not, Julie?"

"The cross, best Carl!" exclaimed Julie, "it smells really strong of wormwood!—— or, no —— what do I say?—it smells ——"

"Wormwood!" said the Cornet confusedly, and looked with embarrassment upon his sprig of wormwood; "I have made a mistake—I have lost, I had ——"

The Colonel laughed sarcastically, "One must confess," said he, "that this *Linnæa borealis* is a most curious plant!"

The one, however, who, soon after this, came to know something more about the *Linnæa borealis*, was her Honour. There existed between mother and son such an inward tenderness, the questions of the one inevitably drew forth the confidence of the other, if this were not volunteered. Of all her children her Honour loved most her eldest son, although she would not confess that her heart knew any difference between them. He was the most like her of

all, not only in feature, but in the intrinsic goodness of the heart. Besides, the care which his extremely weak and delicate childhood required, had cost her a great deal of her own health and strength, and that, perhaps, more than all the rest, had fettered her maternal heart to the child who was preserved through so many sacrifices. That which costs us much becomes precious to us. Now also was she rewarded by the most heartfelt filial love.

If her Honour knew of any mystery, she did not help us out of our darkness. The Colonel seemed to know no more than we did, because he used frequently to joke in gay humour about botany and *Linnæa borealis*, of which word the Cornet had a real horror—and the utterance of which he always endeavoured to prevent, by the introduction of some new subject, the first that offered.

In the mean time he continued his rambles uninterruptedly; even undertook a little journey on foot to an adjacent district, which would occupy a week; because—but of that hereafter.

The Colonel said with his customary quietness, "In a fortnight the young gentleman will join the army, afterwards an expedition to Roslagen will occupy him the whole summer; he will lose his love for botany and the *Linnæa borealis* during that time."

During all this Julie was in her way in a deplorable condition. Lieutenant Arvid, who in the country

missed those subjects of conversation which were furnished by a city life, began in his *tête-à-tête* with his bride, to have nothing to say but, "My little Julie!" to which by way of filling up the pause a kiss always ensued, to which the "little Julie" was sometimes averse. After the lovers had sate beside each other for a long time in silent attention, she began to yawn. Then said Arvid, "Thou art sleepy, little Julie."

"Yes," she replied; "and thanks to thee for it," she thought.

"Lean against me, my angel, and get a little nap," said the gentle voice of her future earthly support, "lean against me and the sofa cushion, which I will place thus. I will lean against the other pillow, and also have a nap—that will be divinely beautiful!"

With rather a troubled look, Julie followed the advice, and presently people saw, both forenoon and afternoon, the betrothed sitting and half-slumbering together. Julie often said, to be sure, that it was a sin and a shame thus to sleep away life, but her bridegroom thought that it was thus that one enjoyed it most, and thus, as not only a good little wife but a bride will attend to the wishes of her beloved, and so Julie took for the present her forenoon and afternoon nap. Once she was heard to say half angrily, in return to Lieutenant Arvid's prayer that she would consider him as a cushion, "I assure you, that I begin to do so in real earnest."

THE BLIND GIRL.

I see—the night alone.

HER Honour, who now for certainty had discovered the grounds of my supposed melancholy in a probable tendency to consumption, prescribed for me a course of milk diet, and leisurely walks into the fresh air early in the morning.

Perhaps also she did so in order that in an easy manner she might make me the companion of Elisabeth, to whom the physicians had prescribed the same diet. But however it might be, four things were made out: I was melancholy; I had consumption; I should be cured; and I must walk.

I began thus to drink milk, and walk out arm in arm with the silent Elisabeth through the beautiful parks when the birds, especially at this time of the day, struck up concerts, in which they were not disturbed by the gentle steps of the two wanderers, nor by merry words from their lips.

Elisabeth's state of mind was in the beginning cold and unfriendly. She was silent almost always, and

the few words which she uttered bore the impression of a diseased and irritable temper. She often asked, "What o'clock is it?" And upon my reply, there always followed from her an impatient sigh, "Not more?"

I was silent, because I—because I really did not know what to say—because I dreaded by an imprudent word to wound her restless, sensitive, unhappy soul. I saw her suffer—would so gladly have endeavoured to console her, but knew not what tone I must strike that it might beneficially reach her heart. Besides it seems true that human words have less power to assuage the suffering of a being than this mild, fresh, life-giving spring air which floated around us, than this melodious chorus which swelled forth from the sighing groves, than this rich delicious odour which seemed to be the breath of young nature, which we drew in with ours, and which livingly pressed to the inmost of our souls. Ah, what could I have said, indeed, more beneficial, more tender, more calming, than this beautiful, wonderful poesy of nature!

By degrees Elisabeth's state of mind became gentler. My silent but unobtrusive attentions were no longer repulsed unkindly. She spoke more frequently, and with greater calmness.

One day she said to me, "You are as quiet and kind as nature; it does me good to be with you." As I never, with a single question, sought to intrude

into the inmost of her soul, she seemed by degrees to forget altogether that she was surrounded by anything else than that nature in whose bosom the most unfortunate being need not fear to pour forth her sufferings, and who often is the best, the most consoling friend. She often uttered broken sounds—now full of a still sorrow, now mysterious, wild, murmuring; sometimes she sung monotonously, but charmingly, a sort of cradle-song, as if she would hush to sleep the stormy feelings of her heart. This pensive, pleasing song produced in me sometimes exactly that melancholy which her Honour wished to cure.

In her behaviour Elisabeth gave the same play as hitherto to her unrestrained outbreak of feelings. She often stretched forth her arms with vehemence, or made movements with them as if she would remove from her something horrible; sometimes she pressed her hands tightly upon her breast, or clasped them together upon her brow with an expression of unutterable suffering. Often her movements were so violent and so wild that it seemed to approach an outbreak of insanity. But as soon as our morning promenade was ended, and we drew near home, she regained by degrees her reserved, cold, almost unnaturally stiff demeanour.

One morning when we had sate upon a bench, she said hastily to me, "We sit in the sun,—is it not so? I feel its warmth. Let us seek the shade. I do not like the sun, and it has no part in me."

I led her to a bench where a leafy hedge of lilachs kept off the beams of the sun.

"It must be right beautiful to-day," said Elisabeth; "I think that I have never felt such a sweet air." And now she began to question me about the colour of flowers, about trees and birds, about all which surrounded us, beautiful, but for her invisible, and all this with a tone so mournfully gentle, so filled with quiet resignation, that a deep and inward emotion overcame my heart; and some tears, which I sought not to repress, fell from my eyes upon her hand, which rested in mine. She hastily withdrew it, saying, "You weep for me, you can feel compassion for me! Nobody should do so—nobody should pity me—nobody should deplore me,—I do not deserve it! You shall no longer be deceived in me—know me—detest me! This heart has wished to commit a crime—this head has committed a murder! I advance now—I know it—I feel it—towards death, but towards a quiet, almost easy death, far from shame and dishonour,—and I had deserved to end my days by the hand of the executioner upon the gallows."

I seemed at these words as if the day darkened around me—I was silent in quiet horror. The blind girl was silent too; first with an expression of wild despair, then with a laugh of scorn upon her pale lips. At length this passed off in an expression of gloomy dejection, as she softly and slowly asked, "Is anybody near me now?"

"I am here," replied I, as calmly and as gently as possible, for I felt how much more the unhappy guilty one needs the kindness of his fellow-creatures than the innocent sufferer.

"Soon," said Elisabeth, and laid her hands upon her breast; "soon will the flames of hell, which rage here, be extinguished! Silent death, I know thy friendly approach! The fanning of thy waving wings gives to me at times a moment's alleviation. Soon will this cold heart rest, stiff in the cold earth! Motherly earth, thou wilt clasp in thy breast the weary child, whom no maternal heart, no father's breast, no friend's sustaining arm has known and blessed, during the whole of life's long, long day! But why do I complain? That I may receive the alms of despicable pity? And not once do I deserve that! I am a miserable being!"

She was silent; but, after a pause, began again:

"It is strange!—to-day—to-day—after so many hundred days of the silently-sustained misery of life, my heart will speak—will, like a long-fettered captive, breathe a freer air—will step forth to-day, regardless of the feelings of horror and detestation which the view of the miserable criminal must awake in others. The flames will now blaze up once more, and cast abroad a light, even though a ghastly one, before it is extinguished for ever.

"Turn from me your face, Beata! Follow the example of the sun—it is of no consequence,—or

rather is it right so,—I have now something to lose—your pity. Well, I have deserved this punishment.”

She was again silent. Vehement and painful feelings seemed to shake her soul, and an indescribable expression of enthusiasm and melancholy was painted on her beautiful countenance, as she stretched forth her arms longingly, and exclaimed—

“Father-land, freedom, honour! Could I have lived, and fought, and died for you! I should not then have been the wretched fallen being that I now am. O if I had been a man! Then would not my heart have beaten fruitlessly for you, the worthy goal of the eagle-flight of the soul! These flames, which now consume my criminal breast, had then been kindled upon your altars, and blazed on high, a clear and holy flame of sacrifice. But now! Oh, how unfortunate is the woman to whom nature gives a soul, full of fire, strength of feeling, and enthusiasm! Unfortunate the woman who sees in the narrow circle within which she is called upon, quietly and uniformly to live and work, only a joyless condition, a prison, a grave of life!

“I was this unhappy one. Oh, how have I not suffered through this contest against destiny! *This* was the dragon with which I fought—which I fancied myself elected to conquer; and it has thrown me down into the dust, crushed me, trampled upon me like a worm!

“In the haughtiness of my youthful feelings I was

proud of my fire, of the depth and expansion of my feeling. I disdained to regulate myself by reason, to acknowledge any other power than my own will. I felt that I had wings. I would fly. I would raise myself above every thing.—I have fallen !

“O that my dying voice could be heard by every woman who, fiery and impassioned, believes herself formed to be something great, splendid, and astonishing; who fancies that the breadth and expansion of feeling wherewith she is gifted, entitle her to despise the silent world, within which her place in the social ordination is assigned, which is appointed to her both by divine and human laws. O that she could see me, fallen by over-stepping these laws, and hear me warningly say, ‘ Misguided, pitiable being ! struggle against thyself—against thy own impassioned soul ! Behold the dragon with which thou oughtest to contend—whose fire will consume thee, and be the bane of others, if thou do not subject it. Submit thyself to the laws of destiny and society—combat with thyself, or thou wilt suffer, and wilt be crushed like me ! ’

“For me it is too late to combat—the power is gone, the will is gone ! The fire has the upper hand. The temple burns, burns, burns; and will burn, till the winds find in it nothing but ashes. I have myself kindled my funeral pile—I consume and suffer !

“Thou world around me; full of harmony, beauty, and song; which, like an awakened, smiling child, surrounded me with caressing arms; in vain thou

smilest, in vain thou flatterest. I understand thee not—I suffer!

“When I was young—it is a century since then—there reigned already in my breast, by turns, heaven and hell. Yet then I was nearer to the first—now I see the heaven no longer. When I was young, very young, I loved already with the whole strength of passion. My first love was for my native land. You smile perhaps, find perhaps this feeling ridiculous in the breast of a girl. So have others done; and yet—my native land! The noble, beloved land of Sweden, had all thy sons had my heart, then wouldst thou now be that which thou once wast—the home of heroes—the lion of Europe!

“You have read—have heard speak, of martyrs—of the fearful torments, of the almost incredible cruelties which the friends of freedom and fatherland have suffered in all ages; and you have turned away your eyes in horror, withdrawn your thoughts. I read also, I heard also of the fate of these, but thirsted to share them; dwelt with curiosity upon all pangs, all torments of hell; the bliss of heaven seemed they to me, if borne, O fatherland, for thee! I besought from heaven for the honour, the joy of these!

“Whilst the flower of my youth unfolded, and my feelings swelled like the streams of spring, rolled the murder-chariot of war through Europe—only an echo of the clangour of arms, which glittered forth from contending masses, reached our peaceful land.

But it reached my heart, and awoke there the wildest, the most transporting feelings. Ah, I was only a woman! people laughed at my enthusiasm, they ridiculed it. I wept the bitterest tears of indignation, and concealed my fervour in my own breast.

“Peace was made, and the names *fatherland* and *freedom*, which in the blaze of the fires of war seemed so splendid and bright, lost, under the shadow of the olive, many of their enchanting rays. Even in my breast these beautiful names lost their magical power, since no longer was united to them, thoughts of danger, combat, and honourable death. Peace was made; the excitement of mind was stilled. The world which surrounded me was more common-place and uniform than before. But my heart remained like itself, wished to live, wished to labour; I was as before, and more than before, full of desire to reach the splendid heights of existence, and was by my fellow-creatures, the laws of society, conventional life, and established proprieties, repulsed again for ever to my life of nothingness. Never was a galley-slave so unhappy as I. Restless as the spirit of the tempest my soul agitated itself, embracing the world, it desired to raise itself to the stars, pressed through the covering of every feeling, the impediments to all knowledge; and my body and my observation remained fettered to that which is the most despised, and the most trivial in life. I lived as it were, two existences in one,—and the one was the torment of the other.

“The only passion permitted by the world to the heart of woman—in education its development mostly takes place through the reading of novels, sentimental poetry, and such like,—is love. I became acquainted with it. People say that it ennobles the woman, that it creates her happiness,—it has conducted me to crime, it conducts me now to my grave!

“My father died. He never understood, never loved me, never made me happy! why did he give me life? Had my mother lived, O she would have understood, would have loved me! I have heard much said of her; she had suffered much—combated much. I was the offspring of her last sigh, which I drew in with my first breath—with the first and last mother’s-kiss. Therefore was perhaps my whole life also like to a work of death—a strift, an eternal combat. Soon, however, it will be at an end!

“My guardian, from whom I had lived hitherto very distant, took me to live with him. You know him—but no, you know him not! You fancy him to be a God upon earth,—and he is a stern, inflexible man,—an irreconcilable, severe judge. O how stern has he not been with me! How I loved him! I had nobody and nothing upon earth. He was every thing to me. I saw nothing and nobody except him. I told him so. O if he had only had some gentleness, some mercy towards me! But he was only severe. His eye was cold, his word austere. I was in despair, but I adored him nevertheless.

“I was handsome, I was intellectual; full of youth, and life, and feeling. As the waves in vain strike against the rock which resists and repels them, so in vain were all my feelings, all my natural gifts, offered like a sacrifice on his altar. Ah, the waves may yet bathe with tears the hard breast which breaks and repulses them! I could not weep upon the hand which thrust me back,—which extended to me the chalice of death. He whom I above all things valued and loved, he called my feeling for him criminal. I know not whether it were so or no. Common it was not,—and perhaps not suitable for earth. I should not at that time have shunned the glance of angels into my heart—they would have understood me. The angels of heaven love indeed!—and must love in a higher and purer degree than the children of earth, for they love the highest good—they love God! Ah, he was a God to me! Why was he only a vengeful austere judge? His judgment of me caused me to despise myself, and adore him only the more!

“At one moment worldly pride arose in my breast; I wished to conquer my passion,—to punish the inflexible severity of its object.

“I betrothed myself to a young man—good and amiable I believe—who loved me; I do not remember much about him. I wished to punish, and thought I could do so by this means; yes—because sometimes there passed through me the belief that—I was loved by him who was every thing to me. Can love be the

only fire which does not possess the power to warm the object about which all its burning rays collect?—And besides that, I was so beautiful—and he was, I know it, weak towards female beauty. Yet what have I said! when indeed was he weak? When did I see him waver—the proud, noble, strong? Oh, I—I was the weak—the bewildered, the befooled, the miserable!

“Preparations were made for my marriage; the bridal dresses were all ready; they surrounded me with presents, caresses, and flatteries. I looked upon him whom I loved—he was very pale.

“The marriage-day came—the hour for the ceremony came—I looked at him, he was pale; there burned in his eyes a gloomy flame; but he said—nothing. In the last important moment—I looked again at him—at that time he turned his face from me; his handsome, noble, beloved face, he turned from me,—with a look—O memory! I said, *yes!* Hell was in my heart!

“That same evening I went forth and hid myself—hid myself from every one. It was strange in my head and in my breast. How they sought for me!—ha, ha, ha! there was a commotion!

“I had some money with me, and succeeded by travelling under an assumed name, in reaching one of the sea-ports of Sweden.

“I saw the sea—a storm agitated it—the morning heaven stood above it with red flames. I remember

it yet—ah! it was beautiful! I sate upon a rock, and looked out at the sea. The immeasurable opened its arms for me; billow rolled over billow—roaring, foaming—thither—thither—in the infinite, towards the unbounded distance, where ocean and heaven embraced each other. It roared and raged—hu! it was fearful and magnificent. Something like a fresh gale swept through my troubled breast. I felt myself refreshed, strengthened. The billows spoke a language which did me good. They whispered, they beckoned to me, ‘Thither! thither!’ Half the day I sate silent upon the rock, looked out at the sea and listened; saw the sun ascend from the waves, saw the sails with white dove-like wings upon the blue sea, under the blue heaven, floating away towards some far-off peaceful shore. I listened to the admonitory voices of the billows, and determined to follow their call.

“I wished to go to America. I wished to go far, far from the earth which he trod, from the air which he breathed; from the language, the manners, which were his.

“The day was come on which I was to set out—it was now the hour. I was about to ascend into the ship of my deliverance, its streamers floated merrily in a favourable wind; soon should I be rocked upon the heaving waves, which sung so pleasantly,—amid their song, all at once was heard the sound of a voice—I felt my arm seized—and dragged back by force.

Terrific words were spoken to me by a beloved voice. I scarcely understood them—every thing appeared to me strange—incomprehensible. Like a prisoner was I brought back to my husband. At that time I felt something extraordinary in my head and breast—it was a dance, a whirling—and as it were a gnawing grief. It increased and increased in violence—I became what people call—mad!

“The same hand which led me with force from the shore of deliverance, now fettered my hands. *He* whom I loved so infinitely—for whom I would have given my life a thousand times—*he*—laid me in chains—and conducted me to—the madhouse!

“A time, without time, passed over for me there—days, nights, mornings, evenings, all were alike,—all were a blank. Of this time I remember nothing,—only this, that I several times heard a well-known voice name my name; also this, that once somebody near me said, ‘Yet if she could but weep!’ I wondered then very much what all this meant, and often repeated, in a sort of confused uneasiness, ‘weep?’

“One day—I know not where they had conducted me—nor with whom I was. Before my eyes every thing floated in wild confused masses. Then all at once I perceived a roaring, like that of a stormy sea; but the roaring was possessed of a sound, a tone—swelled in wonderful and mighty harmony, sunk into a pleasant and grave melody.

“With this a voice united itself, which sang clear and still,

‘O Lamb of God which takest away the sins of the world.’

“Like a cloud which, full of the dew of heaven, sinks down upon a hard barren earth, thus sank down upon my stiffened soul the holy harmony, and extinguished its scorching lava.

“Impelled now by a strange power, I began loudly to accompany the singing, and sang with a full remembrance of the words and the music. It was that which I heard when I received the communion first—when I, with holy feelings, bowed my knee, and saw heaven open itself above me. At the words,

‘Give us thy peace!’

my tears began to flow, and from this hour my consciousness returned. Yes, that—but peace—ah, I perceived not that; and now always, and perhaps for ever, tarried heaven’s dove far from me.

“Ah, I desired not that it should come to my breast! there was no submission, no sanctification, no desire for it.

“My husband was dead. I was glad of it. I came again to the house of my guardian; I wished to do so; my heart had undergone a change, and I believed that I hated as much as I had loved before. I wished again to see him for whom I had suffered so much—see him to defy him; to let him see, and if possible feel, that even I could be proud,

cold, disdainful. I wished to humble him. Adored by wife and children, and loving them in return, I saw him stand calmly and happily in the bosom of his family. For all—for the very meanest had he kindness; for me he had only a look more cold, more proud, more severe than before.

"I felt all the chords of my soul vibrate. A horrible feeling took possession of my breast. His actual coldness mocked my assumed coldness; his strength, my weakness; his calmness, my perpetual disquiet. He had acted severely towards me. I thought that he, in his happy pride, trampled me like a worm in the dust. His image pursued me; sleeping or waking I saw only it. It stood before me like a giant; he stifled, he stopped my breath. If he were not, then I should breathe! If he were not, then *I* should be! If he no longer lived, then he would cease to be my life's torment. Struck out from the number of the living, he would soon cease to exist in the memory of the living. I would give myself air—revenge—punish him—revenge! To-day, to-day his calm look defied me—to-morrow!

"Crime, like a word, the offspring of thought, springs forth and appears often like something harmless; but its consequences extend themselves through eternity.

"One evening I mixed arsenic in a glass of almond milk, which my guardian was about to drink.

"I had some by me to mix for myself; for it occurred to me that I should feel—remorse."

“Have you felt remorse?”

I was in no mood to answer.

Elisabeth continued, “After I had done this horrible deed, I went up to my own room; I felt myself calm and cold; marble cold was my body; so seemed my heart too; its throbbing was stupified. I stood before the fire, warming my icy hands, when I began to hear violent movements and an anxious noise in the house.

“Anxiety then took hold of me. I went down and saw my victim, pale as death, almost without consciousness, sitting leaning back on the sofa, surrounded by wife and children, who were sunk into an actual agony of despair.

“As I entered, my guardian cast a look upon me; never shall I forget it! Then a burning spirit of hell approached me, and seized with sharp bloody claws upon my heart. *It was remorse!*

“I confessed my crime aloud; called for the curse of them whom I had made unhappy. I threw myself on the floor, and let my forehead kiss the dust. Nobody raised against me a voice of accusation; but no hand was extended to me. I crept to the feet of him whom I had murdered; I wanted to kiss them; but another foot thrust me back—it was his wife. I kissed it, and was so happy as not to lose consciousness.

“I continued for a long time in perfect bewilderment of mind. When I recovered my consciousness,

I saw my guardian standing beside my bed, heard his recovery from his own lips, heard him give me his forgiveness.

“So sunk, so deeply sunken was I, that I would rather have heard his curse. It would, it seemed to me, have made my unworthiness less deep, and him less great.

“The wildest storm of all passions raged in my heart. I cursed the light, and the light withdrew its beams from my unworthy eyes, and eternal night enclosed my body as well as my soul.

“The storms of nature are short; to them calm, clear days succeed. In the human breast the hurricanes of passion rage long, and have only a moment’s calm. I knew such, but it was the calm of night—the stupefaction of life—stiffening—the cradle-song of darkness. It ceased in order to give place to a new rending, burning fire, which the eternally flowing fountains of tears never could quench. I felt an infinitely oppressive, burning desire for *reconciliation*.

“Oh, the death of the cross—torments, bloody sweat, unending pain! to suffer it, and through it reconciliation; that, that had been delight! But blind, like a mummy among living beings; a criminal broken off from humanity; a nullity in ability, a nothing,—I stood, despicable, despised! O misery, misery, misery!

“That I might, however, at the least, punish myself, I determined to live—to live—a mark for

the scorn of those whom I loved and honoured; to repulse every compassionate hand—and to torment myself as much as possible.

“I left once more the family whose happiness I had nearly destroyed, and for several years passed a wretched life. I returned because death had laid his hand upon my breast. My guardian wished it. He will govern my existence till its last breath. I can no longer help it—it is the decree of fate. I have power no longer,—with me all is past—past!”

She ceased. I began now to speak some composing, admonitory words. I spoke of patience, of submission—I mentioned—prayer.

“Prayer!” repeated Elisabeth, with a bitter smile. “Listen Beata. For the whole of many years I have prayed,—night and day, at all times, at every moment; I have lain upon my knees till the cold has stiffened my limbs to ice, and prayed, ‘O Father, take this cup from me!’ Like a stone, which has been thrown upwards and falls down again and wounds the breast of the sufferer, has prayer become to me—I pray—never again!”

“O pray, O pray!” I said, weeping, “pray only with a right mind—God pities—gives strength to the pure will.”

“God?” said the Blind, with a gloomy voice, “O world,—which I shall never more see;—sun, which no more will light my eyes, thou speakest of a God! Heart, eternal disquiet! in thy throbbing sounds his

name. Conscience, chastiser—thou proclaimest revenge! Fire of love,—thou life of my life! in thy flames I divine of thy eternal origin. But, bright angel,—thou, *faith*,—which canst shew me my God—thee I know not. I had been early cast down into the abyss of doubt. I deny not—but I believe not. I see—darkness alone.”

“And the clearness of reconciliation? And the beaming glory of the Crucified?—and Jesus?” I asked with astonishment and horror.

The Blind was silent a moment, with an expression of bitter melancholy, and then said—

“I once read about a vision or dream—and many a time has its spectral form arisen, horrible and sad, in my inward being.

“In the middle of the night,* shaken by invisible hands, the doors of the church sprang open. A crowd of dejected shadows thronged around the altar, and only their breasts heaved and moved with violence. The children rested, however, quietly in their graves.

“Then descended from on high down to the altar, a beaming shape, noble, sublime, and which bore the stamp of unobliterated suffering. The dead exclaimed, ‘O Christ! is there no God?’ He answered, ‘There is none!’ All the shades began to tremble violently; and Christ continued, ‘I have gone through the worlds, I have ascended above the suns,—and there

* See Madame de Stael's *Germany*, 2nd vol., Jean Paul's *Dream*.

also is there no God. I have trodden to the extremest bounds of creation, I have looked down into hell, and I have exclaimed, 'Father, where art thou?' But I heard there only the rain, which fell down, drop after drop, in the depth,—and the eternal storm, which no order leads, alone replied to me. I then raised my eyes to the vault of heaven, and found there only space—dark, silent, boundless. Eternity rested upon chaos, and gnawed it, and consumed itself slowly. 'Renew your bitter, heart-rending cry of lamentation and disperse yourselves, for all is over!' The unconsoling shadows vanished. The church soon was empty; but all at once—horrible sight!—hastened forth the dead children, which in their course had awoke in the churchyard, and threw themselves down before the majestic form of the altar, and exclaimed, 'Jesus, have we no father?' and he replied, but with a torrent of tears, 'We are all fatherless; you and I, we have no ——.'"

Here the Blind broke off, as if in horror of this diseased, delirious fantasy; was silent a moment; but after this clasped together her hands, stretched forth her arms as she uttered a wild, penetrating cry, full of the most horrible despair.

At this moment hasty steps approached us, and the Colonel stood suddenly before us, fixing upon me an inquiring and uneasy look. The Blind, who knew his step, let fall her hands, trembling, but raised them again quickly towards him, beseeching him,

with a heart-rending expression, "Be reconciled! be kind to me! I am so unhappy! If I am again mad—take me not to the madhouse! It will soon be all over with me. Let beloved hands, at least, close my eyelids!"

Compassion and deep pain agitated the countenance of the Colonel. He looked long at Elisabeth, seated himself beside her, placed his arm sustainingly around her waist, and let her head rest upon his breast.

It was the first time that I had seen him tender towards her. The tears flowed slowly down her pale cheeks. Beautiful she was, but beautiful like a fallen angel, whose expression of despair and deep shame shew that she felt herself unworthy of the pity that was given to her.

I now saw her Honour approaching us in the distance. When she saw Elisabeth in the arms of the Colonel, she paused for a moment, but again advanced to us, although with some astonishment expressed in her face. The Colonel remained still. Elisabeth seemed to see nothing around her. Her Honour came near to us, the glances of husband and wife met, and—melted together in a clear and friendly beam. From a common feeling they extended to each other their hand.

Her Honour caressed Elisabeth, and spoke tenderly to her—she answered merely by sobs. After a moment the Colonel rose, and giving one arm to Elisa-

beth, his wife took the other, and softly and with tender care they led her home between them.

I remained alone quietly in the park. Amid uneasy and painful feelings, I looked up to the mild spring-blue heaven, with inward longing that its clearness might beam down into my soul.

During the wandering through a quiet destiny, saved from the agitations which visit so many pilgrims of life, and sustaining in a peaceful breast a living faith, a sanctifying hope; for the greatest part have the misfortunes, suffering, and despair of my fellow-creatures been the cloud, which at times has concealed my beautiful sun and the gladness of my life, which many times has made me look up on high with a painful—"wherefore?"

But the answer is not long delayed, because it has been demanded with the inward voice of prayer. Calming winds have wafted through my excited soul, and have whispered,—

"The clouds fly, the sun remains still. The crime, pains, and despair of human beings cannot darken the goodness of the Creator. We see merely a small part. Those die—change. God is unchangeable."

In vain is it that we doubt, that we murmur, that we disquiet ourselves. All the erring paths of life have a point of exit. In the moment when the darkness seems to us the deepest, we are perhaps the nearest to the light. After the hour of midnight strike indeed the hours of morning; and were it even

the bell of death, which announced the hour of deliverance, what could we indeed say to ourselves more consolatory, if to us the labyrinth of life has been narrow and dark, than, "A door will open, and we shall come forth—to the light!" Let it seem to us ever so narrow and so closed against us,—we know it—"A door will open to us!" Well then,—let us wait, let us hope!

Elisabeth's state of mind remained from this day yet more unquiet. She had now and then attacks of actual insanity, and the care and anxiety for her were obliged to be redoubled.

Her suffering and her unpeaceful life diffused frequently some gloom over the remainder of the family. In particular it seemed to operate prejudicially on the health and temper of the Colonel.

That I may not weary the attention of my readers by fixing their eyes upon a picture so dark, I will conduct them now to another. It is bright and gay; in it appears united the youth of the earth and the human heart. We will call it—

SPRING AND LOVE.

“I, I too was in Arcadia!”

INNOCENT joys! innocent cares! ye friends of my young years,—angels, who, amid smiles and tears, opened to me the portals of life, upon you I call to-day! And you also, thoughts, pure as the blue of heaven! feelings, warm as the beams of the May sun! hope, as fresh as the breath of the spring morning! I call you—come, O come to revive my wearied mind.

I will sing of spring and love, youth and gladness; —pleasant and fresh memories, the nightingales of the moments of youth; left up your tones, I will set to notes your melodies, and be yet once more enchanted by your song!

On the two-and-twentieth day of May ascended a clear spring-sun, and tinged with gold-yellow beams Cornet Carl's eyelids. The stars of the order of the sword glittered as it were by dozens before his dreaming eyes. He endeavoured eagerly to see them more clearly, strove to open his eyes,—woke, and saw the

stars vanish before the splendid beams of the day, upon whose prisms of light millions of atoms danced.

A quarter of an hour after this he was to be seen, with his game-bag upon his shoulder, brushing through the fresh morning dews. It was a spring morning, beautiful as that described by Böttiger:

All nature lay so glad and still;
Green stood each molehill there;
And every lark sang sweetly shrill,
To every floweret's prayer.
The little brooks flowed softly on;
And o'er the lake's calm breast,
Through reeds she went, the silent swan,
So rich in song, in silver vest.

Up to the sun the eagle flew,
Its brightness thence to draw;
From flowers the bees their nectar drew,
And emmets dragged their straw.
In the rose's cup the butterfly
Its purple wings conceal'd;
And the maple green, that grew hard by,
Two cooing doves reveal'd.

A young man there, in joyous mood,
Was walking in the shade;
The spring-time revell'd in his blood,
And love his eye display'd,

In this young man we now see Cornet Carl, who, in the affluence of pleasant and fresh feelings, which the morning hours of life and nature united alone bestow, looked around him,—now up to the bright blue heaven, now down to that reflected in the diamonds of the grass glittering in morning dews; now

to the far distance, where the rosy-hued light clouds withdrew themselves ever farther and farther.

A delicious balsamic odour came caressingly upon the wings of the zephyrs——

Thus far had I written, amid the ever increasing warmth of the feelings, when I suddenly perceived so strong a fragrance of rose-essence that my head became quite confused; at the same time I became aware of a buzzing and humming around me. I lifted my pen (which just at this moment was as if it were possessed) from the paper, and looked around me.

What a sight! The room was full of little shining cherubs, with garlands of roses in their hands, garlands of roses round their heads, and whose incessantly trembling wings occasioned that extraordinary buzzing. The longer I observed these wonderful beings, the more dazzling and bewildering seemed to me the colours which shone in their eyes, upon their cheeks, upon their pinions, and so on. And as I turned my eyes from them, upon other objects,—behold, then seemed to me my ink white, my paper black, my yellow walls were green, myself (in the glass) *couleur de rose*. No wonder was it that the rose odour mounted up into my head.

Now I recognised the little rascals. I had seen them before; and who has not seen, who does not know them? It is they who play their jugglery upon the girl of seventeen, and turn her head a little. It is they who confuse the eye of the youth,

and let him read in the tablets of his future, "*pleasure and usefulness*," instead of "*usefulness and pleasure*." It is they who bear the blame of people giving themselves so much trouble about nothing, running thirty miles after a jack-o'-lantern; that people many a time cannot see clearly enough to lift up their hand and catch hold of their good luck which goes close beside them. It is they who, like April weather, travel about, deceiving the whole world, and making fools of the whole world; who contrive that P. gets married, and that B. remains unmarried, and that both do wrong; who occasion A. to say "Yes," J. to say "No;" and they both say wrong. It is they who throng even into the banking-house of Beräkenman, make him confused in his bills, and cause him to write down a seven instead of a two. It is they, in short, who buzz so unmercifully, humming and whirring around the bard, and often cause him to produce that which has no sound reason in it, to paint reality with false colours, and to mislead himself and others. Charming phantasmagoria of the imagination, little rose-coloured rogues! Who knows you not? But who avoids not, who would not willingly chase you away, who has for once experienced your tricks and your cheats? Who, in particular, who lives and weaves through the *rez-de-chaussée* of every-day life, works with discretion and order to throw his shuttle into the simple web, must he not take care, more than any one else, that he do not allow his brain to

be mystified and his thoughts bewildered by your rose odour? I saw in what danger I stood, upon what a dangerous path my pen had begun to travel. I laid it down, rose up, drank two glasses of water, opened the window, breathed of the yet snow-cold April air, looked up to the bright heaven, looked down into the court where they were hanging out clothes, next turned my attention upon three cats, which always sate in a ground-floor window opposite to me, observing, with philosophical looks and little motions of the head, the world around them; with one word, I allowed my looks to take hold of the every-day world around me, and come out from the world of fantasy which raised me upon the wings of my youthful remembrance, and spread itself around me. One of the pretty little rogues had whispered in my ear, "One may permit to oneself a little falsehood, merely to produce a good effect;" and if I had not in time looked about me, and bethought myself; then, perhaps, might the reader have happened to see such a spring, and such a love, the like of which is nowhere to be found, unless, perhaps, in Arcadia.

When I returned from the window, the air of the room was free and fresh. The little rose-coloured shapes of delusion had vanished, and I again saw all objects in their true and natural colours.

The picture of reality must resemble a clear stream, which, during its course, reflects with purity and truth the objects which mirror themselves in its waves,

and through whose crystal one can see its bed and all that lies thereon. All that the painter or the author, in the representation of these, can permit to his fancy, is to act the part of a sunbeam, which, without changing the peculiarity of an object, yet gives to all hues a more lively brightness, lets the sparkling of the waves become more diamond-like, and lights up with a purer brilliancy even the sandy bed of the brook.

In the strength of this new discovery, I assume with calmness the part of sunbeams, allotted to me in all discretion, and allow it to pour its brightness over a true representation of spring and love. But sunshine may weary, like every thing else, when it lasts too long (as, for example, in Egypt), therefore I will allow my sunbeams merely here and there to glance forth during our wandering through the elysium of youth, and to light up only the places where I desire that my reader should pleasantly delay his steps; or, also, where I have a desire to sit down to warm and rest myself. Let us now step out of the shadow into

THE FIRST SUNBEAM.

It shines through a gloomy pine wood, and presents us with a view of an open space. In the background we see that little grey house which figured in the scenes of a foregoing chapter. In the foreground we see the green shores which are bathed by the clear waves of a lake. Granite rocks rear up here

and there their unshapely forms, and stand like sentinels around the heaven-blue palace of the water-lady; young birches peep forth beside this with green crowns, and rock their branches, rich in joy, in the west-wind which plays around, full of life and delight, in one word, full of *spring*.

On the shore of the lake, in the green birch-wood, we perceive a young man and a young lady sitting beside each other upon the flower-decorated grass. They look happy,—they seem to enjoy nature, themselves, every thing. . He relates something to her; his eyes beam; now they look up to heaven, now glance around, with an expression of proud, blessed consciousness; now they rest for a long time upon her, as if they would read into her soul. Now he strikes his breast; he stretches forth his arms, as if he would embrace the whole world; he speaks with all the warmth of a deep and inward devotion, and must therefore most certainly persuade. She listens kindly to his words; they seem to please her; she smiles, sometimes amid tears, sometimes with an expression of surprise and admiration; clasps together or lifts up her hands with an exclamation of lovely delight, and looks in an especial manner all the more convinced. Convinced of what? Of the young man's love?

Pish, pish !

Must it be of love directly ?

No,—convinced that Gustaf Wasa was the greatest

king; Gustavus Adolphus, the greatest knight which ever lived; that Charles the Twelfth was a hero as great as Napoleon, as well as that *the Swedish people were of all people the first and foremost on the earth.*

Some of my readers, who have a particularly good memory, or else an uncommon faculty for guessing, may perhaps send up the rocket-like idea:

“Here have we certainly Cornet Carl and his Linnæa borealis, or the handsome Hermina!”

So it was.

“But how have they made acquaintance?” asks some one perhaps.

I answer, see the Old Testament, First Book of Moses, twenty-fourth chapter. Eleazar’s acquaintance with Rebecca. The modifications which are caused by the difference in ancient and modern times, manners, and modes of speech, between an Idyllian scene in Mesopotamia in the time of the Patriarchs and one in Sweden in the nineteenth century, are not so important as to induce me to give a new sketch of a scene which would only give occasion to every one to repeat Solomon’s tiresome, but true proverb, “There is nothing new under the sun;” and besides, would excite in me the unpleasant feeling of giving a feeble copy of a beautiful original—but enough; here also was a weary traveller, a well, a young maiden who came with a pitcher to draw water, and who gave to the traveller to drink. This one had to be sure no camels, but still a gentle, thankful heart, for all love,

excepting christian, impenetrable. And this beautiful weakness and this noble strength caused him to accompany that kind maiden to her home, and carry for her her pitcher of water.

Since we have now taken a draught of light (for, in order not to offend the Temperance Society, I will not call it a dram) of the first, we will go over to the

SECOND SUNBEAM,

Which will give us a sight of the Wood-family, as well as an insight into Cornet Carl's heart, which may afford us an oversight of that which may be the intention of fate regarding him, and may lead to moral reflection on the superintendence which it is good for every one to have over his heart amid the magic play of life.

If Hermina might with justice be compared to Rebecca, yet the Baron K——, Hermina's step-father, had not the least resemblance to the hospitable Bethuel. Cold and unfriendly in the extreme, he almost repulsed the young wanderer. His wife, the already announced Wood-lady, was not much kinder. It seemed as if she felt both fear and vexation to have been discovered in that hiding-place. But no one could long be fearful, or cold and unfriendly, towards a young man like Cornet Carl. His candour, his amiable and fresh cheerfulness, the goodness which beamed from his whole being, his simplicity,

together with a certain noble grace in his deportment, which he derived from his father; his careless, free, gentle look, which always met clearly and calmly that of others, which attached to him persons of the most dissimilar temperaments, characters, and minds, and made them always happy with him. People felt themselves involuntarily inclined to put confidence in him, wished to live in his society, as they wished to live in open natural scenery,—because in such they feel life to be lighter, themselves happier and better; because we there—but what is the use of making a memorandum of that which everybody knows by heart.

Cornet Carl wished to captivate, and captivated actually both Baroness K—— and her husband, so that they assented to his desire of visiting them again, if (and this was made an express condition) he would promise that to no one, and not even to his family, would he mention his acquaintance with them, or their place of residence.

The Cornet promised this, because—because he felt a particular, indescribable desire to come again.

A few days were sufficient to make him aware of the singular and unhappy misunderstandings which reigned in this family; but it was a long time before he understood the causes of them. Baron K—— was a Swede, his wife and stepdaughter Italians, who had arrived with him in Sweden about two months before. Their dresses were splendid and

remarkable, and elegant in a high degree. Their behaviour, their mode of speech, their accomplishment, their talents, betrayed that they belonged to the higher and more refined circles of society; and yet they lived now in want of many of the necessaries of life—N.B. of those which become necessary to the effeminate children of the world. Excepting one single room in which, as it were, was heaped together all the splendour which had been rescued from a shipwreck of fortune, all in the house exhibited actual poverty. The daily food which the handsome Italians enjoyed, was no better than that which every peasant family in Sweden had. The Cornet, for his part, always declared that there was no better diet than herring and potatoes.

Between Baron K—— and his wife it was almost always stormy weather. There seemed to be between them now the most vehement love, and now the most decided hatred, which sometimes in the deportment of the Baroness assumed an expression of proud disdain, whilst he gave vent to expressions of anger and rage. Scenes often occurred between the unhappy pair, in which they mutually made the most bitter reproaches and accusations; the most insignificant trifles could give occasion thereto. An almost senseless rage on his side, exclamations of despair and tears on hers, ended such scenes mostly. The character of the Baroness seemed fundamentally to be noble; but she was at the same time, inflexible, proud,

and passionate in the extreme. Her husband, at the same time weak and despotic, was of an outrageous and unbroken temper; only in moments of a kind of remorseful calm, which he sometimes had, might it be suspected that here also existed a nobler nature—a something which deserved to be loved.

Patient, kind, and gentle, as a suffering angel, stood Hermina, spreading the snow-white wings of her innocence reconcilingly between these natures, angered and embittered in the strife of passion.

She was what is called a *beautiful spirit*. But this was not born so, like her lovely body. It was formed by early suffering, early experience of domestic sorrow and trouble, especially through an early awakening of religious feeling, which enabled her to bear with patience, to resign with smiles, sacrificing her pain to Heaven, and working full of love and unwearyingly upon earth. To lessen her mother's suffering, and to obtain for her somewhat more of comfort, she took upon herself even the coarsest business of the house, which otherwise would have been done by the one maid of the family. And it was affecting to see that lovely, ideal, finely accomplished being, working like a maid-servant, carrying burdens under which she sunk; that is to say, under which she would have sunk, had not Cornet Carl come and set things in order, and taken the burdens and carried them upon his own shoulders. From the hour in which he came, there was a great change

for Hermina. As Jacob served Laban for the beautiful Rachel, so served Cornet Carl Baron K——, to alleviate Hermina's pain. He hunted and fished, provided stores for the kitchen, and was only with difficulty prevented from being cook himself, when he saw how the beautiful face and hands of Hermina would be burnt by the fire. Help of any other kind he dared not to offer in their poverty, to these proud and high-minded gentlefolks.

Hermina had hitherto served her mother almost like a slave, but without being rewarded with the tenderness which she so well deserved. The Baroness K—— seemed accustomed to receive sacrifices without thanks; still less did she seem willing to make any herself.

She bore with difficulty the troubles of adversity and poverty in which she saw herself placed. She required that Hermina, as well as herself, should continually be both tastefully and handsomely dressed, and which a very rich wardrobe, brought from Italy, enabled her to do. It was as if she wished in these relics of a departed pomp and splendour, to find consolation for her present fate; or as if she could not believe that this fate was actually serious, but merely a momentary enchantment, which might be dissipated at any hour; as if she expected that some fairy's wand would change the little grey house into a palace; and she held herself therefore in readiness, in a dress suitable to her rank and her dignity, to receive visitors and congratulations.

Hermina was treated by her stepfather at the same time with indifference and severity, and one saw plainly, that that which she did for him, she did not do for his sake—but for God's sake.

From the moment when the Cornet came into the house, he had there a sort of power, which increased daily, and this he made use of to make Hermina's life happier.

Baron K—— was for the most part absent during the day, and did not return till evening; sometimes also he remained two or three days away. During these intervals of peace, the Cornet contrived to procure for Hermina a liberty which she never knew before, and which she now enjoyed with childish delight. He induced her mother, who had a feeling for the beauties of nature, to take long walks in the wild but romantic district. Botany had formerly been her favourite pleasure; the Cornet revived her taste for it—sought for flowers everywhere (even I fancy where there were none to be found), that he might convince the handsome Italian, who was charmed with the abundant vegetation of her native land, that Sweden was as rich in flowers as it was in heroes and iron. At least it was certain (and that he himself acknowledged afterwards) that he had not the least diffidence in representing the mountain cudweed, trefoil, dodder, the marsh ledum, the sweet gale, wormwood, tansy, and such like, as most uncommon and remarkable productions of nature.

He mentioned in particular, as the most beautiful thing in nature, that wonderfully charming flower, which has derived its name from “the world’s greatest naturalist, the Swedish Linnæus.” He tried to inspire the Baroness and Hermina with the greatest possible desire to find this miracle of a plant. Every day he had new suspicions about their being able to find it in some new district; he sought long—long and well, and discovered it only at that moment in which he discovered his love.

These walks gave the Cornet continual opportunities of being with Hermina. He gave her his arm in walking; when they rested he shaded her from the sunbeams; by degrees he induced her to run about and climb among the rocks, in one word, to enjoy the free, fresh, youthful life, of which her days passed hitherto in the stillness of a convent, had given her no idea. As she now with the rosy hue of health and gladness upon her cheeks, beautiful and light as a nymph, floated about in the charming scenery full of fragrance and spring, and often turned her angelic countenance beaming with grateful devotion towards him, who was the cause of her life’s enjoyment, then—then felt the Cornet something wonderful in his heart; a warmth—a delight—an altogether something which had been to him hitherto a totally unknown feeling.

The Baroness seemed to contemplate the two young friends as two children, whose sport she allowed,

because they still brought all their gaiety, all their flowers, as a sacrifice to her. The Cornet possessed the good faculty of keeping people in good humour with themselves, and therefore with others.

After all, however, he was most useful to Hermina in the moments when the so often recurring unpleasant domestic scenes drew from her bitter tears, which she for the most part went to conceal in the kitchen. There he followed her, consoled her with brotherly tenderness, or endeavoured by conversation, or interesting stories, to lead her thoughts to pleasanter subjects.

On one of these occasions Hermina was needed and called for. She was not instantly found, and this occasioned severe reproaches from her stepfather. The Cornet took up these as a glove thrown to him, and the manner in which he replied to the challenge, obtained for Hermina greater freedom. He might now frequently go out alone with her. Her education in the higher branches of knowledge had been neglected. He was her teacher, especially in Swedish history, he was to her as a brother. She soon gave to him too the sweet name; and as they one day had been studying together the Swedish grammar, they came to the decision that *thou* was incomparably more beautiful than *you*, and that they must use it to each other.

Hermina again was for Cornet Carl, one cannot exactly say, an instructress, nor precisely a sister;

but she was so unobservedly the light of his eyes, the gladness of his life, she was his——. It is high time to inform my reader, and especially my young lady reader, how it was with Cornet Carl. He was—in love.

That indeed nobody would have guessed. He himself neither believed, nor suspected, nor guessed it before

THE THIRD SUN-BEAM.

As he walked one evening, at the going down of the sun, on the shore of the mirror-calm lake, Hermina leaned upon his arm. She was silent and pale. Pale with that paleness which shews that the heart is joyless; that she was resigned, but that she suffered.

A scene deeply agitating to her gentle spirit had just occurred between her parents. Cornet Carl had borne her away from them almost by force, and now endeavoured, but without success, to divert and enliven her dejected mind. After they had walked for some time, they seated themselves under the birch-trees, beside a mossy wall of rock, and observed silently the dying purple, which painted itself in the mirror of the water, and upon the woody heights of the opposite shore.

It was then that Hermina first turned a tear-

moistened eye to Cornet Carl, and said, "Thou art very good, my brother." She wished to say more, but her voice trembled; she paused, seemed to struggle with her emotions, and continued as she half turned from him her countenance: "Thou tarriest here on my account, out of kindness to me, and thou hast for my sake borne many disagreeable and heavy hours, and—thou couldst nevertheless be so happy; thou hast indeed a father, a mother so good, so excellent—sisters whom thou lovest so much,—they must miss thee—return to them—and remain with them—be happy—never come back hither!"

The Cornet sate silently and looked on the lake, and as if in a mirror of the soul, he looked at the same time into his own heart.

"Why shouldst thou continue to come hither?" began Hermina again, with a persuasive expression in her sweet gentle voice. "Thou givest thyself a deal of trouble, a deal of vexation, and yet thou canst not change my fate. My father has to-day spoken bitter, threatening words to thee—ah, leave us! Why shouldst thou delay? Be not uneasy for me, Carl! God will strengthen and help me!"

"Herminal" said Cornet Carl, "I cannot leave thee—but it is as much for my sake as for thine."

Hermina turned to him her countenance with an inquiring look, whilst some large tears slowly rolled down her cheeks.

"Because—because," continued the Cornet deeply

excited,—“That, Hermina—because I love thee beyond all description—because I have no happiness in the world, if I do not see thee, am not with thee.”

Hermina’s angelic countenance beamed with astonishment and inward gladness.

“There is then somebody who loves me—and that is thou, my brother! How good God is to me!” and she extended to the Cornet her hand.

“Dost thou also love me?” asked he, with a secret trembling, and held the small white hand in his.

“How could it be otherwise!” replied Hermina. “I have been indeed, for the first time in my life, happy since I knew thee. Thou art so excellent, so good. Thou art the first person who has loved Hermina.”

“And the first whom Hermina has loved?” asked the Cornet not very stout-heartedly.

“Yes, certainly! except my mamma.”*

* I know perfectly well what a heap of Romance-gold I at this moment push from me. I see plainly how this little crumb of a novel might have been better, might have been more interestingly carried out, conducted with more animation; how both the coming in and the going out of this piece might have made my book go off splendidly. But this would have required more words; ergo, more lines; ergo, more paper, and my publisher is so horrified lest my book should be too big, and cannot be sold for a rixdollar banco, that I see myself compelled to crush together my soul and my ideas, that I may get my book into the shops within the stipulated price. My publisher fancies that the Swedish public will not lay out very much in such every-day things. I think that he is right, that they are right, and that I am right, to write accordingly.

An inward feeling of felicity overcame the two young lovers; and as if Amor himself in a rosy cloud had sunk down upon the heathy turf beside them, there floated around them, at that moment, a delight, so sweet, so enchanting (certainly Olympus had not more beautiful ambrosia), that Cornet Carl, amid the delight of his soul, sprang up and exclaimed, "This is the Linnæa! My life's flower is found!" It grew really in long leafy trails down the mossy rocks. Soon was a wreath woven for Hermina. Who can describe the scene of pure and inward happiness, of innocent joy which followed? Hermina was pale no longer—the question was not again thrown out whether Cornet Carl should return to his family. Hermina was indeed *his*. He was Hermina's. They understood each other, they were happy. All was become good,—they should always be together. *Nobody* could divide them more—they belonged to each other, on earth—in heaven.

Nature seemed to sympathise with the young happy pair, mild and full of love, she enclosed them like a tender mother in her caressing arms.

Who would not willingly give ten heavy years of autumn for one moment of spring and love?

THE FOURTH SUNBEAM

—shines over the Cornet's wrath so grimly.

One warm pure day the Cornet arrived at the house.

in the wood, heated, wearied, longing, pining, thirsting to cast a kindly glance on his beloved, to receive a refreshing draught from her hand. Scarcely had he reached the house when he heard the sound of her harp. He hastened up, and beheld *Hermina* more lovely, and more tastefully dressed than ever, sitting with the harp in her lily-white arms, and beside her, —O horror, O lightning, and thunder, and death! work of the nether-regions, invention of hell! beside her sate—not *Cerberus* the spectre, with three heads; no, worse!—not *Polyphemus* with one eye; no, worse, worse!—not the Evil one,—no, worse, worse, worse, far! Ah, it was not “*The Beast*” which sate beside “*The Beauty*,” no, it was a young man, handsome as a statue, another *Prince Azor*.

The handsome, proud, calm, cool, refined, and ornate *Genserik G——* observed with astonishment the heated, dusty, and more than that, as he seemed, the highly confounded *Cornet H——*. Soon, however, he elevated his *Apollo-figure*, advanced, with animation full of grace, towards the new-comer, extended to him his hand with friendly condescension, rejoiced to see him in the country, and reminded him of the last time they had met in *Stockholm*. The *Cornet* seemed not at all to rejoice, and scarcely uttered one civil word on the subject. *Genserik* went again to *Hermina*, and asked her to sing. The *Cornet* went up to her under some pretence, and whispered to her, “Do not sing.”

With commanding voice and look, the Baroness desired her daughter to sing. Hermina sung, but with a trembling voice. The Cornet seated himself in a window, and wiped with his pocket-handkerchief the perspiration from his brow. He spoke, during the whole time that Genserik's visit lasted, scarcely three words; in part, because nobody talked to him; in part, because the young G—— talked incessantly himself. And he talked so well, had such select and polite turns in his conversation; told a story with so much interest,—he had so much knowledge and insight into things, that it was a real pleasure to listen (horror to the Cornet). Besides this, he had a consciousness of his own worth, which raised it all the more in the thoughts of others.

“I am—I have—I do—I consent—I think—I wish—I will—I have said,” was the theme around which and to which his thoughts and words always played rondo, at all times returned. Summa: that *I* became by degrees so great, so important, swelled so greatly, that Cornet Carl saw *his I*, as it were, melt away or crushed down. He felt himself almost stifled in that oppressive atmosphere, and was obliged to seek for breath in the fresh air. He walked up and down in the orchard, amid desperate thoughts.

“What bad-weathered wind, surely coming from the sand-desert of Zahara, had blown hither the young Law-commissioner, the fatal Genserik G——? The Baroness paid him extraordinary compliments.

What does that mean? He is rich, he is handsome, accomplished; he is Law-commissioner, he is—ah, good heavens! what is he not? He shewed evidently his admiration for the lovely Hermina—in particular (it is enough to make one mad) for her singing.

“And Hermina! why did she sing, when *I* asked her not to do so? Why did she let compliments be paid to her by a strange fellow—a Law-commissioner into the bargain? Why did she give to her only friend hardly a friendly look? Why did she not take one single step to obtain for him—so much as a glass of water; but let him stand there and wipe his forehead and be thirsty, and be plagued and tormented both body and soul?”

Nobody replied to the questions of the unlucky lover. The heaven was cloudy about his head, and his feet got entangled in the trodden-down rows of peas. Suddenly he heard the trampling of horse's hoofs. It sounded to the Cornet like the kettle-drums of gladness. Genserik rode away, and the Cornet returned hastily to the house, to receive an explanation and satisfaction. He received neither. The Baroness met him coldly and repulsively. Her severe and watchful eyes rested upon Hermina, who sate and sewed, without venturing to look up. It was in this moment of mutual constraint and displeasure, that the Cornet was surprised by the visit of his family. How it then went on, the reader knows.

A time of grief followed for the Cornet. He could no longer go to the house of his beloved without finding Genserik there before him. His rival was openly favoured by Baron K—— and the Baroness. The Cornet was treated by them with more and more indifference. Hermina alone was gentle and kind; but dejected, silent, reserved, and avoided his questions.

In order the better to watch and observe the movements within the Wood-family, the Cornet determined to undertake a so-called journey on foot; which consisted in this, that he quartered himself in a hay-barn as near as possible to Hermina's place of residence; here he slept at night, and during the day wandered around Hermina's dwelling like a bee around flowers.

One may be happy in such a barn—yes, lying upon straw or hay, may fancy oneself in heaven! But if the thorns of grief stick in the heart, then it is certain that the barn and its bed of thistles add pain to torment. The Cornet made a memorandum on this subject.

A great change, by degrees, now took place in the Wood-house. There was abundance of eatables, wines, and many articles of luxury; there was an increase of several servants. Baron K—— was in brilliant good-humour; the Baroness more majestic and proud. The Cornet all the more superfluous and overlooked. Genserik G—— grew over his head.

The greatest antipathy sprung up between the two young men; but the Cornet, angry, bitter, and biting, shewed mostly to disadvantage beside the uniformly cheerful, always coldly polite, and calm Genserik. He felt this, read it in all countenances, and became thereby the more embarrassed. He played what is called a "miserable fiddle;" and that we may no longer weary the ears of the fine-feeling reader with it, we will look about us in the

FIFTH SUNBEAM.

More dissatisfied than usual with Hermina, her clouded friendliness, her reserved manners with himself, with the whole world, Cornet Carl walked one evening, full of thought, up and down in the sougling pine-wood. When he reached the spring where he had first seen Hermina, he stood with troubled feelings, observing in its clear mirror his sun-burnt, dissatisfied looks, his face so little handsome, comparing it, in thought, with Genserik's handsome, bright, and circumspect appearance. Suddenly then he saw in the well a face looking down beside his own. It was beautiful as an angel—it was Hermina. A shiver of delight thrilled through the Cornet; but was quickly stifled by a bitter feeling.

"Hermina," said he, "it was certainly Genserik thou thought of meeting."

Hermina stood silent a moment, then laid her hand

gently upon his arm, and only said, "Carl! have we ceased to understand each other?"

He looked at her, and her gentle, loving, but tearful eyes met his.

Lovers! if the silken skein of your love and your happiness has become entangled, and you wish to strengthen it, do not talk. Look at one another!

Cornet Carl felt all at once as if a veil fell from his eyes—the mist vanished from his soul. All at once was clear to him; and so heavenly clear. Long stood the young lovers silently there, and drunk light, and peace, and felicity, from their mutually bright beaming eyes.

As there was no longer any spark of uneasiness remaining in their souls, the lovers began to make explanations and declarations.

"Is it not thou," said Hermina, among other things, "is it not thou who first loved me; who made me feel that there was a pleasure in living? And even if thou hadst not done so, how canst thou think that I could place a cold egotist like G—— beside thee?"

"But he is so confoundedly handsome!" said the Cornet, laughing, and yet half confused.

"Is he? That I have not remarked. He does not please me. I know one who pleases me—one whose face it does me good to see—one whom I think handsome. Wilt thou see his portrait?"

She led him to the spring. The Cornet saw there

with satisfaction his sunburnt countenance beaming with joy.

“ But thy parents favour Genserik —— ”

“ And I favour thee.”

“ He loves thee.”

“ And I love thee.”

“ Hermina ! ”

“ Carl ! ”

When a person has left this earthly life, to go to a better in heaven, people say, full of confidence, “ Peace be with him ! ” And then they turn to think about other things.

Even so when two lovers turn from the valley of care of this life, and enter the bright heavenly kingdom of reconciliation, one may say, “ Peace be with them ! ” and think upon other subjects.

Yet we will, as the last “ God’s peace be with it,”
cast now a

SIXTH SUNBEAM.

And this smiles over the delight which beams upon Cornet Carl during several happy days. He was sure of Hermina; and her silence, her reserve, her politeness towards Genserik, his multiplied visits, his I, his lover-politeness—Baron K—— and his wife’s coldness towards him (Cornet Carl)—nothing more disturbed him. The barn afforded him a heavenly bed. The spring in nature mirrored the spring in his soul. The woods, flowers, waves, winds, birds,

all sang to him, and for him. "Gladness! gladness!" Gladness?—Ah, Rinaldo, Rinaldo! Hark! The trumpet's clang calls thee from Armida, and thou must resign gladness.

The trumpet's sound! Not from the fields of Palestine—not from that promised land—but from Ladugårdsland; or rather from the Ladugårdsgård. All as one! Now, Rinaldo, Cornet Carl, thou must leave her who is more virtuous, more discreet, therefore more beautiful than Armida. Thou must tear thyself from her enchanted palace, the little grey house. Thus wills that unmoveable General-in-chief of all life-regiments, *Fate*, who pays so little regard to the demands of the heart.

The trumpets sound, duty calls—to the camp, to the camp; and then,

THE SEVENTH SUNBEAM

is extinguished in the lovers' parting tears.

In order to spare our own, we command our thoughts, turn to the right, march! again to Thorsborg. There we shall, with old acquaintance, go about new business, as if

TO DIG THROUGH THE EARTH, ETC.

ONE evening, as we were all assembled around the sick-bed of the blind girl, Professor L—— read aloud a translation of Herder's "Ideas." The subject was the development of mankind in another world; the explanatory hints, as regards his transformation, which are given to us on earth, by the changes which we remark in the kingdom of nature, and which are all a gradual advance towards perfection.

Professor L—— closed with this remark on the foregoing: "The flower seems to us at first as a vegetating seed, then as a sprout; this puts forth the bud; and now the flower first unfolds itself. Similar unfoldings and changes are shewn to us by other existences, among which the butterfly is a well-known symbol of human transformation. See there crawls the ugly, coarse, greedy caterpillar; his hour comes, and a feebleness of death comes over him; he fixes himself firmly; he swaddles himself up, and spins here at his own shroud, as if in fact the organs of his new existence were within himself. Now

the rings work, now strive the powers of the new organization. The change goes on slowly at the beginning, and seems destructive; the ten feet remain in the dried-up skin, and the new being is now unshapely in all its limbs. By degrees these shape themselves and come in order, but the existence awakes not before this change is perfected: it now presses towards the light, and the last development quickly takes place. A few minutes only, and the tender wings become five times greater than they were within the covering of death. They are gifted with elastic power, and with the splendour of all beams which can be found beneath the sun. Its whole nature is changed: instead of the coarse leaves upon which it earlier fed itself, it enjoys now the nectar-dew from the golden cups of the flowers. Who, in the form of the caterpillar, could have divined of the existing butterfly? Who would recognise in it the same being, if experience had not shewn it to us? And both these existences are only periods of life of one and the same being, upon one and the same earth. What beautiful development must not lie in the bosom of nature, where the organic sphere is wider and greater, and where the periods of life which it unfolds embrace more than a world.

“ And thus nature shews to us also, in this analogy of existence, that is, of progressively perfecting existence, wherefore she weaves into her realm of shapes

the slumber of death. It is a beneficial stupor, which enwraps a being, and within which the organic powers strive after new development. The being itself, with its greater or less degree of consciousness, is not strong enough to see and direct its combats. Thus it slumbers and awakens first, when it stands forth perfected. The slumber of death is also as it were a fatherly, gentle alleviation; it is a composing opiate, under which operating nature collects its powers, and the feeble invalid is refreshed."

Here L—— ceased. A deep and pleasant emotion had overcome us all. We sate silent, with looks riveted upon the poor invalid, down whose cheeks large tears gently rolled, whilst low, lamenting tones came from her lips. Her Honour embraced her with tenderness. The Colonel laid his hands as it were in blessing upon her head. A deep, sonorous, continued snoring drew, at this moment, all our regards upon Lieutenant Arvid, who was sleeping comfortably in a corner of the sofa, with mouth open, and nose turned up in the air. This trumpet tone was a signal of revolt for Julie, who with glowing cheeks vanished from the room. After a moment I went to seek for her, and found her standing upon the steps before the house, leaning with crossed arms upon the iron balustrades, and looking fixedly upon the bright evening heavens, in which pale stars began to appear. "Julie!" said I, laying my arm around her waist.

“ Ah, Beata!” sighed Julie, “ I am unhappy—I am very unhappy! Must I remain so for my whole life?”

Before I could reply, Lieutenant Arvid came out on the steps, and exclaimed with a yawn, “ What the thousand are you doing here, Julie? Standing and getting cold—getting cold in the head and chest. Come in again, dearest. I fancy, too, that they have begun to bring in supper. Come, then!”

“ Arvid,” said Julie, “ come here to me for a moment;” and she took his hand kindly, and said with animation, “ See how beautiful every thing is, this evening; let us go into the park. There, you know, where we once agreed to—I want to talk with you there, to beg something from you—”

“ We can just as well talk with one another in the room—”

“ Yes—but it is so lovely this evening. Look around you! Listen to the bird, how sweetly it twitters! Do you hear the wood-horn yonder? Look there, too, where the sun descends—what soft crimson—ah, it is a lovely evening!”

“ *Charmant*, my angel,” replied Lieutenant Arvid, with a suppressed yawn; “ but—I am outrageously hungry, and perceived a delicious smell of chops as I passed the kitchen. I long to meet with them again, in the saloon. Besides, now there ascends a cursed mist. Come, my angel!”

“ Arvid!” said Julie, drawing back her hand,

"we have such dissimilar inclinations—such different tastes. I see——"

"Don't you like chops?"

"God bless you, with your chops—I do not speak of them. But of our inclinations, our feelings—they do not accord——"

"Yes; that I can't help."

"No; but I fear that we are not fitted for each other—that we shall be unhappy——"

"Ah, thou dear one! that may be. One should not meet trouble half way. That takes away one's appetite. Come, let us eat our supper in peace. Come my little wife ——"

"But I will not—and I am not your wife," said Julie, as she turned herself from him; "and," added she, a little lower, "will not be your bride any longer."

"Will not?" said Arvid calmly. "Yes, but you see there are some difficulties in giving that up. You have my ring, and I have yours,—besides, I am not very much afraid; girls have their caprices. Nay, nay, let it be till morning. Adieu, Julie! I go to eat some chops, do you swallow down your caprices," and he vanished in the eating-room.

Julie took my arm and went down into the orchard, whilst she wept violently. I walked silently beside her, waiting for her to open her heart with some complaint against her bridegroom. But she was silent, pressed my hand, and continued to weep.

As we turned into a side alley, a figure wrapped in a cloak came slowly towards us. Professor L——'s voice proceeded from this, and began kindly joking Julie on her romantic taste for evening walks. When he approached us, he saw her weeping eyes, and became suddenly silent and grave.

"Professor L——," said Julie, half merrily, and with a voice half choked with weeping, "tell me, what must a person do, when he sees that he has begun a very foolish business and cannot go on with it—"

"Then," said Professor L——, "wisdom must bear the consequences of folly."

"And one should be unhappy for one's whole life?"

"Unhappy one should not be,—but better and more prudent one should be, and should make all past errors steps by which one should ascend nearer to perfection."

"That sounds beautiful, most especially edifying—and in the mean time one should grow weary of wisdom and perfection for a whole life,—and find every day insufferable."

"Only a very weak person," said Professor L—— mildly, "can so sink under the weariness and anxiety of life. The most gloomy and joyless position in life has its points of light, if one will but see them. Within ourselves we may in every care and trouble most sûrely find the springs of consolation. If our surrounding circumstances disturb or vex us, let us

seek for some plan of freedom and an inward rich life within ourselves. Then may we say with Hamlet, 'O, I could let myself be enclosed within a nutshell, and fancy myself lord of an immeasurable world!' To become acquainted with this world which lives within us, to regulate it, to bring it into clearness and progressive development, is an enjoyment which no position in life can deprive us of, and an enjoyment which we must soon acknowledge as sufficient to make us love even the coldest earthly life. To learn to think, is to learn to live and enjoy."

"But," sighed Julie, "how can one learn to think with a——"

"With a man who only thinks about chops?" ended I in spirit.

"Good books," continued L——, "are gentle comforters, guides, and friends. With their help one can, if one earnestly wishes it, not go wrong in bringing one's inward life into equipoise and consistency." He was silent for a moment, and added with warmth and emotion, "my books, how much have I not to thank them for!"

"You have been unhappy?" said Julie, with heartfelt sympathy.

"Every thing which I loved most tenderly on earth, have I lost—and that not merely through death. Since my childish years has this trial followed me. Every thing upon which I warmly fixed my heart has been torn from me. Many a bitter moment has

passed since I was able to bow myself submissively before the will of the Eternal God, and yet——”

“O that one could comfort you,” exclaimed Julie, with child-like fervent devotion.

“I have,” continued L——, “sought to strengthen my heart, to preserve it from suffering so bitterly. I have struggled long with its sensitiveness—I am no longer young—and yet (this he said with a sorrowful smile) I shall have perhaps soon to go to my books to find consolation.”

“I wish I was a book!” said Julie with tears in her eyes.

Professor L—— looked to her with fatherly—no, not exactly fatherly, but nevertheless indescribable tenderness.

“Good, amiable girl!” said he in his beautiful, harmonious voice; and continued after a moment, more calmly, “It is weakness to complain. We find strength to endure, in prayers, and in the fulfilment of our duties. Let us obtain our strength from these fountains.”

He extended his hand to Julie, who gave hers weeping.

At this moment we reached a ditch, from which three little black figures, which seemed to ascend up from the earth, met our astonished eyes. And scarcely less astonished were we as we recognised the little Dumplings and a playfellow with them, standing up to the middle in a deep ditch, and sunk in deep

deliberation. To our repeated questions regarding all this, succeeded on their part, first silence, then some confused sounds, at last the discovery and the rather dim explanation of their great secret. They had merely undertaken to dig through the earth, and to give their family, and in particular the Colonel, a great surprise thereby.

That which now arrested their progress was certainly not the difficulty of the undertaking, bah! but a deep thought, which arose in the brain of the little Claes, that when they had got through the earth they then should probably fall through it, and then where should they come to?—that—would Professor L—— be so good now as to tell them that?

We now all laughed together.

Professor L—— deferred his explanation to the morrow, and, joking kindly, sent the pigmies with their giant-schemes home. A messenger came at that moment after them and us, to say that we were waited for at supper. The little triumvirate set off at a short gallop. We followed more slowly after, but now were surprised by Lieutenant Arvid's cursed mist, which stood like a wall between the orchard and the castle court. We now observed for the first time, that Julie was without a shawl. I was not much better provided for. L—— took off his cloak, and insisted on wrapping it round Julie. She would not at all listen to it, because L——'s health was not of the strongest. They would have stood till now

contending and protesting, if I had not come between with a compromising project, and proposed that they both should make use of the very wide cloak. It was adopted; and Julie's delicate zephyr-like form vanished in a corner of the cloak, which she laughingly wrapped around her. And the train went forward through the night and mist.

That was, however, a little crazily done, thought I afterwards. The late Madame Genlis and M. Lafontaine no less, in their romance-world, never would have let two lovers come under a cloak without making use of such an excellent opportunity for a declaration of love, and I should really wonder if Mrs. Nature did not this time open a way, let some sigh, some word —

I listened attentively as I followed the inhabitants of the cloak, but—they were silent,—no word, no sound. Yes, now!—What was it? Julie sneezed. Now L—— said, indeed, “God help!” and this may help them to something—no, he said nothing.

We leave the orchard, we go across the court. Will nobody speak then? Now!—no. We mount the steps, we enter the door; now then!—no! The cloak falls from Julie's shoulder; she thanks and curtsays, L—— bows.

As we came into the saloon, Lieutenant Arvid sate and ate chops. They had waited a long time for us. For our excuse I related the contention about the cloak.

During the whole of supper, her Honour shook her head at Julie to reprove her for so great, unheard-of imprudence as to go out so late without a shawl.

When Lieutenant Arvid perceived the eyes of his bride which had been weeping, he seemed very much confounded, but probably he thought, "it will all be right when she has eaten and slept;" for he made no haste over his supper, and afterwards sought no opportunity of conversing with his bride, and went to bed at his usual time, and with his usual calmness.

But Julie's uneasiness did not leave her; on the contrary, it seemed to increase. In vain Arvid prayed her to take "a little nap," and to consider him as a "cushion." She seemed no longer to find repose upon it. In vain his father came, old General P——, with his magnificent equipage, and besought his little daughter-in-law elect to drive out with "the Swans"—it helped nothing. There daily occurred between the betrothed a many little quarrels, which assumed, spite of Arvid's unexampled phlegm, more and more of a serious character. Her Honour, who now became observant of this, was at first quite uneasy, and always held herself prepared to knit together again the broken thread of unity with some good-humoured jest, or some conciliatory word. It succeeded, to be sure, still; but—every day became anew entangled.

Thus went on a time. Cornet Carl set off at the breaking up of the camp to Roslagen. From this place he wrote the most despairing letters on account

of dust and heat, and vexation, and ennui, and such like. About botany he said not a word.

During the whole of the summer Elisabeth's condition remained the same, and her Honour continued to consider the milk diet necessary for my chest and my melancholy.

The Parcæ spun the life's thread of the rest of the family of common flax, mixed with a little hemp, but still more silk, till the end of the month of August—when they lifted the shears. Let us see—

WHY?

AFTER a heavy and sultry day, a mass of storm-clouds collected themselves together, and covered the whole heaven at sunset. A sort of silence of death spread itself over the whole region. One heard no sound from speedily home-going herds, no bird twittered; the leaf of the aspen moved not; even the swarms of gnats ventured upon no hurrah, as usual at the going down of day; the whole of nature stood as if in a painful expectation of something mysterious and uncommon occurring.

Later in the evening began the fearfully beautiful scene.

Pale lightning illumined every minute the whole region, which in the intervals was wrapped in an almost night-like darkness; and by the lightning-flashes was shewn how masses of clouds assumed ever darker hues, and in threatening shapes congregated together above the castle. Now and then a rapid tempest passed through the air, to which again succeeded a dead calm. With a dull but strongly

increasing noise was heard the thunder-chariots rolling forth from many sides.

Her Honour hastened from stove to stove, from window to window, to see that all were well secured. Julie and Helena stood with their father in a window, and drew closer to him at every fresh flash, every fresh thunder-peal.

I went to the blind girl. She sate upon her bed in a stooping, bent position, expressive of the utmost weariness of life, and sung with a low and melancholy voice—

It is night, it is night!
My eyes are dark, on my heart is blight,
For repose it longeth.

Give me rest, give me rest,
And room in the house by the earth-worm possess'd,
O pallid death's angel!

O let me sleep low,
Ah! I am so weary of watching and woe,
So weary of living!

Here the arms fell, and her head, in weariness of life, sank down on the cushions. She was silent a moment; I saw her smile mournfully, and then begin again to sing, but in a clearer voice and more cheerful tone—

When the morning dawns clear,
And the song of ascension my grave draweth near,
Which calls to existence,—

Shall I see thy day,
King of Light, and from earth's sordid clay
Raise up my forehead?

Here her tears began to flow; and changing her tone, she sang, weeping and in broken stanzas—

O mother, O mother!
Be my defender,
Clasp thou thy daughter,
The guilty, repentant!
Teach her what prayer is,
Teach her what hope is!

• • •
Give to her tenderness,
Give to her quietness!

O mother, O mother!
Warmly embrace me,
Clasp to thy bosom,
So tender, so loving!
Let me experience
How in affection,
Bosom to bosom,
Throbs so divinely!

Ah, ne'er have I known this,
On earth whilst abiding!

• • •
Lonely I wander,
Lonely, love truly;
Lonely I suffer,
Bitterly, bitterly!

• • •
And e'en in dying,
Still I love lonely!

O mother, O mother!
Take me, O take me
Hence from the cold world,
Hence from its sorrows!

• • •
Glittering spark of light,
From the dust call me!
Lift me from darkness,
Raise me to splendour!

A violent thunder-clap, which echoed through the whole castle, interrupted her song; to this succeeded others, even more rapidly and more violently. A wild storm began to rage at the same time.

“Is anybody here?” asked the Blind. I went up to her. She said, “I heard music, which does me good. Lead me to the window.”

When she came there, she crossed her arms on her breast, and turned her face up to heaven. The lightning flashes passed over the lovely pale face, whilst the terrific claps of thunder seemed as if they would strike down the being which, with a kind of defying gladness, raised a calm brow towards the spirit of destruction.

By degrees, violent feelings seemed to arise in Elisabeth, and the combat in nature found an echo in her soul. Suddenly she exclaimed, “I see something! A fiery hand, with burning fingers, passes over my eyes!”

She stood a moment, as if in eager expectation, and then said with a kind of quiet rapture, “How glorious, how glorious, the singing up there among the clouds! Sister-harmonies, do you call my heart? Here, in my breast, is the first voice,—there, now sounds the second. Now there is unity—now is there life and gladness! Fire of heaven! Maternal-breast! clasp me in a burning embrace! Mother, mother! is it thy voice which I hear—thy hand which I saw?—which I see—I see now again? Beckonest thou me? Callest thou me?”

"Air!" shrieked she now wildly and commandingly, "lead me out into the free air! I will hear my mother's voice,—I will fly to her breast and be warm again. Without are wings of fire, they will sustain me. There is a chariot—hear now its rolling! it will take me. Hence, hence! dost thou not see hands? they beckon. Hear voices? they call—ha! dost thou hear?"

I embraced her with tenderness, and besought her to remain still. She interrupted me, as she solemnly said, "God may refuse to hear thy last prayer, if thou refuse mine. He will bless thee, if thou comply with mine. Lead me, lead me out into the open air! It will be the last time that I shall ask anything from thee. Thou knowest not how all my weal and woe depends upon this moment. Lead me into my kingdom—the kingdom of the storm—there, there only shall I experience peace, Beata, good Beata! See, I am quiet and collected, I am not mad. Hear me, hear my prayer! I have lain in fetters all my life—let me, only for one moment be free, and all my many bleeding wounds will be healed."

I had not courage to withstand this voice, these words. I led her down upon the terrace, which extends on the wall of rock a considerable way outside the castle. The young girl who was Elisabeth's maid, from fear of the storm, would not accompany us.

I soon repented of my complaisance. Scarcely were we come out into the wild uproar of nature, than Elisabeth tore herself loose from me, sprang forward a few paces, and then standing still, raised a loud cry, full of wild, insane delight.

It was a scene of terrific beauty. The lightnings crossed around, with red tongues, the whole region; the storm swept around us, and now rolling, now whizzing thunder-claps circled over our heads. Like the spirit of the tempest, the Blind stood upon the rocks with wild, sorrowful gestures. Then she laughed and clapped her hands together in insane gladness, then turned herself round about with extended arms, whilst she sung with a strong and clear voice:—

Lightning and flashing,
Flaming waves dashing,
From the world's sea of fire!
Wild tempests quaking,
And riven chains breaking
The grave's silence dire!

Thunders—and all ye
Mighty, I call ye
From the world's sullen breast,
Behold, in a woman
Your queen, who doth summon
You, hear my behest!

Lightning, forth wing thou,
Sing thou, O sing thou,
Hail Freedom to thee!

* * * *

The victor's song rings now,
Life findeth wings now;

* * * *

I am the free!

Again she laughed wildly, and exclaimed, "How glorious, how glorious! how splendid! How glad I am, glad! glad! Now is my day of rule come!—A crown,—a crown of fire, will descend from the dark clouds and be placed upon my head. My day is at hand, my time is come!"

At this moment, to my indescribable comfort, the Colonel stood at the side of the unhappy one.

"You must," said he, "return to your room."

With a hasty movement, Elisabeth withdrew her hand from his, and instead, as before, of submissively complying with his wishes, she stood now before him proudly and insolently, with the look of a Medea, and repeated, "My hour is come! I am free! Must? Who dares to say that word to me, here in this place? Stand I not in my own realm? Has not my mother fetched me in her arms? Seest thou not how her arms of fire embrace me, and repel thee?"

The Colonel, who dreaded an increasing outbreak of her insanity, wished to take her in his arms, to carry her again to the castle, when Elisabeth hastily, with infinite tenderness, laid her arms around his neck, and said to him, "So, if I clasp thee in my arms, and thou me in thine, then will my mother take us up both in her bosom of fire. What bright and heavenly bliss! This is my day—my hour is come! I am free, and thou art taken captive. I defy thee—I defy thee ever again to become free!"

Was it the word *defy* which woke the *defiance* of

the man, or was it some other feeling, but the Colonel suddenly released himself from Elisabeth's arms, and stood still at a few paces distance from her.

"Yes, I defy—I defy thee!" continued she. "Thou hast fettered my limbs, thou hast bound my tongue; and yet I now stand before thee powerful and strong, and like lightning, will launch against thee the fearful words. 'I love thee! I love thee!' Thou canst no longer forbid them to me, thy wrath is powerless. The thunder is with me—the tempest is with me! Soon shall I be with them above, for ever. Like a cloud upon thy heaven shall I follow thee all thy life; like a pale ghost shall I hover above thy head; and, when all is silent around thee, thou shalt hear my voice exclaiming—'I love thee! I love thee!'"

A strange and deep emotion seemed to have overcome the Colonel; he stood immovable, with his arms folded, but dark fire flashed from his eyes.

Elisabeth continued with a quiet enthusiasm, "O how deeply have I loved thee! So deeply, so warmly no mortal ever loved! Heaven, which thunders above my head—earth, which soon will open my grave,—you, take I for eternal witnesses! Hear my word! Understand thou, thou, my life's beloved torment, noble, lofty object of all my thoughts,—of my love, of my hatred, yes, my hatred,—hear how it sounds—'I love thee!'—with my being's most inward, most holy life have I loved thee;—deep as the sea, but pure as heaven was my feeling. Thou hast not understood it—

nobody on earth could understand it,—my mother knew it,—and *He* who is above us all. If we had lived in a world where words and deeds could be as innocent as feelings and thoughts—O then, like a bright, warm flame might I have enclosed and shone around thy existence—have penetrated thee with felicity,—have burned a pure sacrificial flame for thee alone. Such was my love. But thou didst not understand it—thou didst not love me—and thou repulsed me, and thou forsook me—and I became guilty,—but loved nevertheless—and love now—and always, and eternally,—and—*alone!*”

“Alone?!!” exclaimed the Colonel, whilst a powerful feeling seemed to transport him out of himself.

“Yes, alone,” repeated the Blind, confused and trembling, “could it be otherwise? I have sometimes suspected—but—O my God, my God! could it be possible? O say, is it possible? By the eternal happiness which thou deservest,—and which never can be mine,—by the light which thou seest, and which I never shall behold,—I conjure thee—say, say, hast thou loved me?”

A moment’s perfect silence reigned in nature. It seemed as if it would listen to the answer, which I also awaited with trembling anxiety. At length, pale, slow lightning flamed around us.

Solemnly, with a strong, almost powerful expression in his voice, the Colonel said:

“Yes!”

The Blind turned upwards her countenance beaming with superhuman bliss, whilst the Colonel continued with violent and deep emotion:

“Yes, I have loved thee Elisabeth, loved thee with the whole power of my heart—but God’s power in my soul was more powerful, and kept me from falling. My severity alone has saved thee and me. My love was not pure as thine. It was not the poison which thy hand gave to me, which disturbed my health—it was the combat with passion and desire—it is the care for thee. Elisabeth! Elisabeth! thou hast been infinitely dear to me,—thou art so yet—Elisabeth.”

Elisabeth heard him no longer; she sunk down as it were under the load of happiness which fell upon her; and I sprang towards her at the moment when she fell like one dying upon the earth, whilst her lips whispered with an indescribable expression of happiness, “He has loved me!”

The Colonel and I were scarcely able to carry her to her chamber. I trembled—his strength was as if paralysed. A sweat of anguish hung in drops on his brow.

Elisabeth recovered, in a short time, her consciousness; but when she re-opened her eyes, and the stream of life again rushed through her veins, she merely whispered, “He has not despised!—He has loved me!” and remained still and calm, as if she had closed her account with the world—as if she had nothing left for her to wish.

During the remaining part of the night, the storm raged terrifically, but the lightnings shone now upon the countenance of the Blind, beaming with inward happiness.

From this moment, and during the few days which she yet lived, all was changed to her. All was peace and gentleness. She spoke seldom, but pressed kindly and gratefully the hands of those who approached the bed upon which she lay almost immovable. One often heard her say, softly, "He has loved me!"

One day her Honour stood beside Elisabeth, who did not seem aware of her presence, and she repeated with indescribable delight the words so dear to her: I saw an expression of pain depicted on the mild, kind countenance of her Honour—saw her lips tremble, and some tears roll down her cheeks. She turned herself hastily, and went out. I followed her, for she had forgotten her bunch of keys. We went through the ante-room. The Colonel sate there, his head bowed upon his hand, as if he were reading. He had his back turned to us. Her Honour stole softly behind him, kissed his forehead, and stifled, as she went into the bed-room, her forth-bursting sobs. The Colonel, astonished, looked after her, glanced then upon his hand wet with the tears of his wife, kissed them away, and resumed his thoughtful posture. After a moment I followed her Honour into her bed-chamber, but she was not there; her hymn-

book lay open upon the sofa, and its leaves bore traces of tears. At length I found her, after I had gone about through all the rooms, in the kitchen, where she was rather scolding the cook, because she had forgotton to cut the cutlets from a breast of lamb which was frizzling over the fire; which oversight actually was unpardonable, as I already had told her twice that we should have breast of lamb for dinner, and cutlets for supper.

“One cannot trust to any one but oneself,” said her Honour to me, a little piqued, as I gave to her her bunch of keys.

I now left Elisabeth neither day nor night.

With an astonishing rapidity her earthly existence seemed to speed towards its end. It seemed as if the first word of affection which she had heard, had been the signal of her afflicted soul's deliverance.

It is so with many children of the earth. They strive against the sting of affliction for many and many a year—live, suffer, and contend. The sting is broken, and they fall down powerless. Happiness reaches to them her beaker. They set their lips to the purple edge—and die!

Besides Helena and me, Professor L—— was almost constantly with Elisabeth. In part he read aloud to her, in part he talked with us in a manner which was calculated to elevate her slumbering feelings of religion, and strengthen her faith in the dear truths which stand like bright angels by the couch of the dying.

Once he proposed to her several questions on the condition of her own mind. She replied, "I now have not strength to think clearly. I have not power to examine myself. But I feel—I have a hope—I have a presentiment of clearness!"—

"May the Lord lift up his countenance upon thee!" said Professor L——, with quiet dignity and prudence.

The next day Elisabeth besought the whole family to assemble around her. As we all, together with Professor L——, were assembled in mournful silence in her room, Elisabeth called by name those whom she wished to approach her bed,—seized their hand, kissed it, as she uttered with humble devotion the word, "Forgive!" So she went through them all. No one was able to speak, and that mournful "Forgive!" "forgive!" was the only sound which interrupted the sad murmur of sighs.

The Colonel and his wife stood there now together. Elisabeth was silent for a moment, and breathed heavily and with difficulty. At last she said, "Will my friend come to me?"

The Colonel went forward—she extended her arms to him—he bent himself down to her—they kissed. O what a kiss! The first and the last—that of love and of death!

No word was spoken. Pale as one dying, and with uncertain steps, the Colonel withdrew. With trembling voice, Elisabeth said, "Lift me up out of bed, and lead me to Mrs. H——."

We did so. She shewed an unusual strength, and supported by two persons, went to the other end of the room, where her Honour, who did not seem aware of her design, sate weeping.

“ Assist me,” said Elisabeth, “ and place me upon my knees.”

Her Honour rose up hastily, to prevent it being done; but, notwithstanding, Elisabeth hastily lay at her feet, kissing them, whilst she stammered forth, with convulsive sighs, “ Forgive! forgive!”

She was borne almost lifeless again to her bed.

From this moment the Colonel did not again leave her.

Through the night which succeeded this day, and the day following, she lay still, but seemed to suffer physical pain. In the evening, as Professor L——, the Colonel, and I sate silently by her bed, she woke out of a still slumber, and said aloud, in a clear voice, “ He has loved me! Lord, I thank thee!”

After this she sank into a kind of sleep or stupor, which continued probably an hour. Her breath, which during this time had been very rapid, began by degrees to become feeble. A long pause occurred—then came a sigh—then a longer interval—and then again a sigh. All at once the breath seemed to cease. It was a terrible moment. A slight spasm passed through the limbs—then a violent sigh or gasp, followed by a sadly-mournful sound—and all was still.

“ She has ceased to be!” said the Colonel with a

suppressed voice, and pressed his lips upon the death-pale brow.

“She *sees* now!” said Professor L——, and raised a solemn and beaming look to heaven.

The joyous air of the summer evening played in through the open window, and the birds sang gaily without in the hedge of honeysuckle. A gentle rose light, a reflection of the lately descended sun, diffused itself through the chamber, and spread an illuminating glory over the deceased.

So still, so free from pain, lay she now there! She who so long had combated and despaired—so calm, so still now! Over the white pillow, and even down to the floor, fell her rich brown hair. On her lips was an extraordinary smile, full of an expression of sublime knowledge. I have seen that smile upon the lips of many who sleep the sleep of death. The angel of eternity has impressed upon them his kiss.

Peaceful moment, in which a heart which has so long throbbed with disquiet and pain, experiences rest! Peaceful moment, which reconciles every enemy to us, which draws near to us every friend, casts oblivion over every error, the beams of glory over every virtue, which opens the blind eyes and releases the bonds of the soul! Beautiful and peaceful moment, although borne upon the wings of a nocturnal angel, thou smilest towards me like the rosy hue of morning; and when I see thee advance towards another, I have many a time longed thou shouldst come for me also.

THE SKEIN GETS ENTANGLED.

ELISABETH was no more. She had been like a gloomy thunder-cloud, and darkened the bright heaven of existence which most nearly surrounded her. When she was gone, all experienced a sentiment of peace and security. Many tears were consecrated to her mournful memory, but no heart recalled her. Pitiab! Elisabeth! thou first gavest peace when thy own heart enjoyed it in the grave.

We see every day that the most insignificant, the least endowed persons, but who are kind and gentle, become more beloved in the world and more lamented than the distinguished, richly gifted, who misuse their talent; who, with all their beauty, their mind, their warmth of heart, have not made one being happy.

The Colonel alone retained for a long time a gloomy state of mind, and was more reserved than common towards his wife and children. Their tenderness and attentions, however, as well as the beneficial operation of time, began by degrees to dissipate this gloom, when circumstances connected with his

domestic circle anew shook his rest, and agitated his naturally powerful feelings.

One day, Arvid's father, General P——, burst into the Colonel's room, full of fury. First of all, he relieved his heart by a salvo of curses and oaths; and when the Colonel coldly asked what it all meant, he stammered forth, almost beside himself, "What does it mean? What does it mean? Thousand d—ls! It means that your—your—your daughter is a cursed——"

"General P——!" said the Colonel, in a voice which brought the angry man quickly to himself, and who replied rather more quietly, "It—it—it—means that your daughter plays with truth and faith, that she befools—fetch me seven thousand!—that she will break off with Arvid, will return to him the betrothal ring. Fetch me seven! that Arvid is beside himself, that he will shoot himself through the head, so violent and frantic as he is; and that I shall be a miserable, childless old man!" Here a few tears rolled down the old gentleman's cheeks, and he continued in a voice in which anger and pain contended: "She sports with my son's peace—sports with my grey hairs. I loved her so tenderly; as a father, brother. As a father, I had set also my hope of the happiness of the evening of my life upon her. It will be the death of me. She says directly to my Arvid's face that she will not have him; directly in my son's face. Fetch me seven thousand! He will be a

laughing-stock to the whole country. He will shoot himself, brother; he will shoot his brains out, I say; and I shall be a childless, miserable old man," etc. etc.

The Colonel, who had heard all this in the most perfect silence, now rang the bell violently. I was in the next room, and went in to the Colonel, in order a little to reconnoitre, and to prepare Julie for that which awaited her.

The Colonel's countenance betrayed anger and severity. He desired me to tell Julie to come down to him.

I found Julie in the greatest anxiety; but, from the General's visit to her father, prepared for that which was before her.

"I know—I know," said she, growing pale at my message, "it must come out—it cannot be helped."

"But hast thou actually," I asked, "broken off with thy bridegroom?"

"I have—I have probably," answered she, troubled and full of anxiety; "I cannot now tell all—yesterday evening a word escaped me against Arvid—he was cold and scornful—I was violent, he was in a passion and rode away in anger."

Again we heard the Colonel's bell.

"My God!" said Julie, and pressed her hands to her heart, "now I must go—and must have courage. Ah! if it were not for his contemptuous look—tell me, Beata—did papa look very solemn?"

I could not say no; prayed her not to hurry herself—to consider well her own promise, once so solemnly given, the Colonel's strict principles regarding the sanctity of such a promise.

"Ah, I cannot—I cannot!" was all that Julie was able to say, while trembling and pale she went down stairs to the Colonel's room. When she came to the door she paused, as if to strengthen her resolve, said "I must!" and went in.

In the course of about half an hour Julie came into Helena's room, where I also was, and looked quite inconsolable. She threw herself upon the sofa, laid her head upon Helena's knee, and began sobbing loudly and violently. The good Helena sate silent, but sympathetic tears ran down her cheeks, and fell like pearls upon Julie's golden plaits of hair. When, after a little time, Julie's suffering seemed somewhat to allay itself, Helena said tenderly, as she passed her fingers between her sister's rich curls, "I have not arranged thy hair to-day, sweet Julie. Sit up a moment, and it shall soon be done."

"Ah, cut off my hair!—I will be a nun!" replied Julie; but for all that rose up, dried her eyes, let her arrange her hair, assisted Helena with hers, and was calmer.

So certain is it, that the little occupations of every-day life possess an often wonderful power to dissipate troubles.

When we inquired what had really happened, Julie

replied—"This has happened, that I am condemned for the whole remainder of my life to do penance for the thoughtlessness of one moment—and to be a wretched being—that is to say—if I submit to the sentence—but I will not—rather papa's displeasure—rather——"

"Ah, Julie, Julie!" interrupted Helena, "think well about what you say!"

"Helena, you know not what I suffer, how I have struggled with myself for a long time. You know not how clearly I see the lamentable and the miserable part of my fate, if I must be Arvid's wife. Ah! I have hitherto gone as if in sleep, and sleeping I gave him my hand,—now I am awake—and should not withdraw it if I saw that I gave it to a ——"

"Arvid is a good person, Julie!"

"What do you call good, Helena? Those who merely are not bad? Arvid (I have tried, I have proved it) seemed good, because he has not been tempted to be bad; calm and collected, because he troubled himself about nothing but his own convenience; reasonable, because he sees no further than his nose extends. Ah! he is merely a collection of negatives—why should one fear to add to his collection, and make him a present of another *no*? Do not imagine that it will trouble him long—he does not love me—he cannot love, he has no feeling! Ah! he is a bit of moist wood, which my little fire would in vain strive to kindle; the flame would by degrees vanish in smoke, and in the end quite go out."

“If even, sweet Julie, Arvid be not the man whom you deserve, and who would make you, as your husband, happy, why should not your fire nevertheless burn clearly? Arvid is, indeed, not bad; he would never become a spirit of torment to you. How many wives are there not, who, united to husbands who beyond all comparison stand far below them, yet develope themselves as noble and excellent beings; create happiness and prosperity around them, and enjoy happiness through the beautiful consciousness of fulfilling their duty. See our cousin, Mrs. M——, how estimable and how amiable she is! And what a man is her husband! Look at Emma S——; look at Hedda R——.”

“Yes, and look at Penelope and sisters and company—ah, Helena, these women have my high esteem, my reverence, my admiration. I would resemble them; but one thing I know clearly—that I cannot do so. That independence in opinion and judgment, that calmness, that clearness, that certainty and perspicuity of principle, which are so necessary when in married life one would take the lead—this I have not—not at all! I am exactly one who requires to be guided—I am a vine-branch, and need the oak for support. At this moment my understanding has developed itself—I feel a better being arising within me—a new world opening itself for me! Would that I might wander through it on the hand of a husband whom I could love and esteem; whose heart would

reply to the purifying fire within mine; who with the light of his clear understanding would illumine the twilight in my soul; (behold Professor L——, thought I)—oh, how much better a being should I then be!—and arrive at a goal which I now rather imagine than see. But with Arvid, see Helena, with Arvid—my world would be like a store-room,—I myself like a bit of mouldy cheese.

“It is truer than you think. Ah, it is a mournful affair, this marrying. There are a great many with whom it has happened as it now might happen with me—they have hoisted the sail of matrimony in foolishness,—have fancied they should reach the island of bliss,—and have been stranded, and fixed for the whole of their lives upon a sand-bank. Like the oyster in its shell, they have crept about and sought for a little sunshine, till the merciful wave came ——”

“Julie! Julie!”

“Helena! Helena! It is a sketch from every-day life; every day strengthens its truth. How many noble natures have been ruined in this way? And so will *mine* be, if I am not able in time to sail past the sand-bank.”

“Julie! I fear that this cannot be done. Papa’s principles are immovable; and among these stands foremost firm adherence to a promise. And I think that *he* is perfectly right. Besides, as regards the annulling of a betrothal, the taking back of a given

promise of marriage, there lies in it a something so deeply wounding to female delicacy, that I consider ——”

“Delicacy here, and delicacy there: I consider it quite indelicate, and in particular quite absurd, that a whole life’s happiness should be sacrificed to delicacy.”

“Could you be happy, Julie, if you lost your connexions’—your father’s affection—the esteem of the world?”

“The esteem of the world—I would not give many stivers for it; but the esteem of those whom I love—ah Helena, Beata—is it indeed possible that I could lose that? Then it certainly would be better that I condemned myself to be unhappy ——”

“You shall not be unhappy, Julie,” said Helena, as with tearful eyes she clasped her sister in her arms—“you shall ——”

“Of that you know nothing, Helena,” interrupted Julie, with irritable impatience; “*I* know that I should be so. There is a something still, besides Arvid’s unworthiness, which would make me so; it is the certainty that I have missed my goal—the certainty that I might have had a nobler, a happier lot—that I might have lived upon earth for the happiness of a superior and excellent being. Ah, I feel it. I might, like a lark, have winged myself on high in freedom, light, and song; and now, now I shall, as I feared, crawl about on the sand-bank

of life, like an oyster, dragging along with me my prison!"

By the repetition of this horrible, but no less correct comparison, a new, vehement grief overcame Julie: she threw herself again down on the sofa, and remained the whole day without eating or being willing to hear any consolation. Her Honour ran, partly herself, and partly sent me, incessantly up and down stairs with drops and smelling-waters.

Julie was really, though not seriously, unwell, and remained two days in her chamber, during which she did not see her father. Neither Lieutenant Arvid nor the General were heard of during these days, to the great comfort of Julie.

Her Honour had always had her own little tactics, or domestic policy, whenever any misunderstanding occurred between her husband and her children;—namely, when she talked with the first, her words were always on the side of the latter; and with the latter she asserted and proved to them that the first was in the right. Her heart was, I fancy, often a deserter to the side of the weaker, because when, in certain cases, every thing was obliged to yield to the iron will of the Colonel, her Honour always caressed her children with redoubled tenderness. She had now also talked with her husband in Julie's behalf, and for the releasing her from her engagement, but found him inflexible ("impossible!" said her Honour); and when she now saw Julie so wretched, she was

imperceptibly towards him—not unfriendly—God forbid!—but, nevertheless, a little less friendly; in appearance (I'll answer for it that it was not so in reality) somewhat less anxious about his comfort and satisfaction in a many little things. A certain unpleasantness, hitherto altogether foreign to the family, prevailed in the house for some days.

“If the mountain will not come to Mahomet—Mahomet must go to the mountain,” said the Colonel to me, one morning, with a good-tempered smile, as he was about to go up the stairs which led to Julie's room.

At that very moment a travelling-carriage drove into the court, and Cornet Carl, with a flushed and almost bewildered countenance, sprang out and up the steps, embraced with silent fervency his parents and sisters, and besought, after this, a moment's conversation with his father.

The moment extended to an hour, when the Cornet, with a pale and disturbed countenance, came alone out of his father's room. As if unconsciously, he went through the sitting-room and saloon into her Honour's boudoir, without seeming to be aware either of her or me, and seated himself silently with his elbows rested upon a table, and covered his eyes with his hand, as if the daylight distressed him.

With maternal anxiety her Honour observed him; at length she rose, stroked his cheek with her hand caressingly, and said to him, “My good boy, what is amiss with thee?”

“Nothing!” answered the Cornet, with a low and suppressed voice.

“Nothing?” repeated her Honour. “Carl, thou makest me anxious—thou art so pale—thou art unhappy!”

“Yes,” replied the Cornet, in the same low voice.

“My child, my son! What ails thee?”

“Every thing!”

“Carl! and thou hast a mother who would give her life for thy happiness!”

“My good mother!” exclaimed the Cornet, and clasped her in his arms; “forgive me!”

“My best child! tell me what I can do for thee? Tell me what thou wantest—tell me all! It must have an outlet some way—I cannot live and see thee unhappy!”

“I must be unhappy, if I cannot obtain, or raise on bond, the sum of ten thousand rix-dollars. If I get them not to-day, Hermina is—*my* Hermina is in a few days the wife of another! Good God! the happiness of my whole life, and that of another, I would purchase with this beggarly money—and it is denied me! I have spoken with my father—opened to him my heart—told him all. He has this sum—I know it—and he——”

“And he has denied thee?”

“Positively, decidedly. He says that it is the inheritance of the unhappy and the needy; and for the sake of these suffering strangers makes his own son unhappy!”

With this the Cornet started up, and went with great strides up and down the room, as he exclaimed, "What low being has dared to blacken Hermina to my father—this God's holy angel? She would deceive me! She—she loved the detested G——! He only, or his emissaries, have been able——"

Here the Cornet massacred a carriage with its accompanying horses (the equipage of the little Dumplings); and her Honour, terrified, removed from her son's neighbourhood a vase with flowers, whilst she, attentive to his complaints, asked anxiously,—"But why? But how?"

"Do not ask me now!" said the Cornet impatiently. "I can say only this now, that my life's weal or woe rests upon my obtaining to-day the specified sum of money. I may become the happiest being on the earth, or the most unhappy; and not I alone——"

"Carl!" said her Honour solemnly, "look at me! God bless thy honest eyes, my son! Yes, I know thee. Thou wilt not let me take a step, the consequences of which I may repent."

"My mother! wouldst thou repent having effected the happiness of my life?"

"It is enough, my child. I go now to speak to thy father. Wait me here."

In a violently excited state of mind the Cornet awaited the return of his mother. I saw that in a moment he was in that delirium of youth which makes it appear incredible that any one can oppose

their wishes or their wills. In such moments people cannot bear the word "impossibility." They seem to themselves as if they could command the sun even, seem as if they could tear up the roots of the mountains; or, which is all the same, tear up the principles from a firm human breast.

It was a long time before her Honour returned. Julie and Helena accompanied her. She was pale; tears glittered on her eyelids, and her voice trembled as she said, "Thy father will not; he has his reasons; he thinks that he does right, and does quite certainly what is best. But, my good child, thou canst be assisted, nevertheless. Take these pearls and jewels. They are mine—I can dispose of them—take them. In Stockholm thou wilt receive a considerable sum for them."

"And here, and here, best Carl," said Julie and Helena, whilst with the one hand they reached to him their treasures, and threw the other affectionately around his neck; "take these also, Carl; we pray thee, take, sell all, and make thyself happy!"

A dark crimson flushed the countenance of the young man, and tears streamed down his cheeks. At that moment the Colonel entered, stood in the doorway, and riveted a keen glance upon the group which occupied the back-ground of the room. An expression of anger, mingled with scorn, lighted up his face. "Carl!" exclaimed he with a strong voice, "if thou art sufficiently unworthy to take advantage

of the weakness of thy mother and sisters to satisfy thy blind passion, then *I* despise thee, I will not acknowledge thee as my son."

Deeply unhappy, and now so deeply misjudged, the bitterest indignation poured its gall into the heart of the young man. He was deathly pale, his lips convulsively compressed. He stamped his foot violently, and was out of the door like lightning. A few minutes afterwards, he mounted his horse and galloped across the court.

THE CORNET ! THE CORNET ! THE CORNET !

“ Halloa ! it sounds through the wood.”

HALLOA ! it sounds. The hunted fly, and the hunters follow. What is the game? An unhappy human being. And the hunters? The furies of anger, of despair, and frenzy. How they drive! An unexampled chase! The hunted fly, and the hunters follow. Halloa! halloa! They lose not the scent—they follow—they follow, through the thickest wood, over the dancing billows, over hill, over dale, with gaping jaws—will swallow their prey—it goes bound after bound—but runs wearily on its course. Halloa! halloa! it will soon be ended!

Onward! onward! spurred the pursued his snorting horse, which flew foaming over hedges and fences. Wild tumults raged in his soul. Wrapt in a cloud of dust, he posted over the road through gloomy and wood-over-grown tracts, whilst he sought to stupify every feeling, every thought in his soul, and listened only to the admonitory forward! forward! which rung in every throb of his fever-wild pulse.

The peaceful inhabitants of the cottages, which he

rushed past like a storm-wind, sprang in astonishment to their door, and asked in wonder, "What horseman is that who is run away with?" And one of them (Stina Ander's daughter at Rörum) declared that she had seen a hound and a hare come forth; the one out of the cottage, and the other out of the wood, and sitting, the one opposite the other with staring eyes; saw the wild rider, after which, quite bewildered and out of sorts, they had sprung past each other; the hare into the cottage, the dog into the wood.

The wild rider, Cornet Carl, made no halt till he pulled up at the gates of the Wood-house, so well known to us, threw himself from his horse, and sprung up the steps. All the doors in the upper story were fastened; all was still. He sprang down the steps. All the doors in the lower story were fastened; all was still and dead. He sprang across the court to a little outbuilding, and pushed open a door. There, humming a psalm, and spinning flax upon a whistling wheel, sate within the cottage a little, wrinkled, old woman.

"Where are the gentlefolks? Where is Miss Hermina!" exclaimed the heated, almost breathless Cornet.

"Ha?" answered the little old spinning-woman.

"Where are the gentlefolks?" cried the Cornet, with an annihilating voice and look.

"What d'ye say?" replied the old woman, as she poked her nose comfortably into a little snuff-box.

The Cornet stamped. (A mended cup fell down from the shelf, three crippled glass jingled together). "Are you stone-deaf?" shrieked he at the highest pitch of his voice. "I ask which way the gentlefolks from here are gone?"

"Which way? To Thorsborg; does the gentleman mean? Ay, then go over the fields, and ——"

"I ask," screamed the Cornet very loudly, in despair, "where the gentlefolks are gone to from here."

"To Fromere? Yes, yes—then you must go ——"

"It is beyond all patience!" said the Cornet, in despair, "it is enough to drive one mad!"

"Ay, ay, indeed!" sighed the little old woman, perplexed and terrified at the appearance of the Cornet's anger, and went quickly to pick up the pieces of the broken cup.

A small piece of money upon this flew under her nose, and the stranger had vanished.

"God preserve me!—God bless!" stammered the astonished and pleased old woman.

Another door on the same floor now flew open before the powerful grasp of the Cornet's hand.

On her hearth, beside her pig (that is to say her child), sate in the room a fat, dear mother, feeding her little bristly-haired boy with hasty-pudding.

The Cornet repeated here his questions, and received for answer—

"Yes, they are set off."

“But where? say where? Did they leave no message,—no letter for me?”

“Letter? Yes; I have one that was left for the Cornet H——, and I was just thinking of setting out with it to Thorsborg, as soon as I have put a drop of gruel into the boy, poor thing—eat, boy!”

“In heaven’s name give me here the letter directly—haste, go this moment, I say, after it, go ——”

“Yes, yes—I’ll go as soon as I have put these drops of gruel into the boy. He is hungry, poor creature—eat, boy!”

“I will feed the boy, give me the spoon—only go and fetch the letter here directly!”

At length the woman went to her chest. The Cornet stood on the hearth, took gruel out of the pot with the spoon, blew it with anxious countenance, and put it into the little fellow’s open mouth. The woman tumbled the things about in her chest, sought and sought. Snuff-box and butter-pot, stockings and under-petticoats, hymn-book and bread, came one after another, and lay all about the floor—the letter not.

The Cornet tramped and stamped in painful impatience.

“Be quick there! No, is it not there? Ah!”

“Directly, directly! wait only a bit, wait—here, no here,—no wait a bit—wait.”

Wait! One may imagine to oneself whether the Cornet was inclined now to “wait a bit!”

But the letter was not forthcoming. The woman put by her things, and muttered between her teeth—

“It’s gone—it’s not to be found!”

“Not to be found!” repeated the Cornet, and poked in his terror a spoonful of hot gruel into the throat of the boy, who set up a loud roar.

The letter was not to be found. “The boy must certainly have picked it up, have torn it in two or else have burned it;” and the dear mother, who was more concerned about her boy’s trouble than the Cornet’s, said angrily to the latter, “Go to Löfstaholm, there you can take leave. The gentlefolks are gone there, and Miss Agnes was here to-day with Miss Hermina.”

The Cornet left a rix-dollar as a plaster for the scalded throat, and cursing half aloud the goose and the gosling, mounted Blanka again, who in the mean time had been cropping the yellow autumn-grass which grew here and there in the court.

Now to Löfstaholm. Six miles had to be got over. Blanka felt the spurs, and sprang off at full gallop.

A river divides the road. The bridge was broken down and was under repair. There is yet another way—but that makes a bend of a mile and half. Blanka soon snorted courageously in the waves, which washed the foam from neck and nose, and kissed the feet of the rider as he sate in his saddle.

Two travellers at some little distance began to talk.

“Do you know, mother,” said the one thoughtfully to the other, “I think that it is the Neck himself, who has ridden on the black mare through the river.”

“Do you know, father,” said the other, “I think it is a bridegroom who rides to his beloved.”

“Trust me, my old fellow!”

“Trust me, my old woman!”

And “trust me, my reader,” the rider stands now on the opposite shore; and forwards, forwards speeds he again through wood and field.

Poor Blanka! when the white walls of Löfstaholm shone forth amid the green-yellow-brown trees thou wast not very far from being knocked up, but at the sight of them the rider somewhat relaxed his speed, and when come into the court, Blanka was able to rest, and to draw breath by the side of three other riding-horses, which proved that Löfstaholm had guests at this moment.

The iron-master and knight, Mr. D——, sate in his room and contemplated with the mien of a satisfied connoisseur, a head in black chalk, done by the promising daughter Eleonora, and the iron-master's lady, Mrs. Emerentia D——, whose maiden name was J——, stood beside him reading with delighted attention, a poem on the pleasure of “Rural Life and Simplicity,” written by her most hopeful son Lars Anders (whom the family called “the little Lord Byron”); as Cornet Carl stepped violently into the

room, and after a slight apology, without troubling himself as to what people thought of him, his state of mind, and his questions, prayed to know what was known here of Baron K—— and his family's hasty journey.

"Nothing more than this," said Iron-master D——, and wrinkled up his brow, "that they passed by here yesterday afternoon, and that Baron K—— was pleased to come up here and say rude things to me, and to pay me, it may be, a fourth part of the sum which I have lent to him out of pure kindness, an eternity since.—A Dido,—Cornet H——, by my Eleonora——"

Mrs. D—— took up the word. "The Baroness, or what must one call her (for I have the idea that she is no more a Baroness than I am), was not pleased once to move to me from the carriage. Yes, yes, one gets beautiful thanks for all the politeness one shews to people. No, she sate as bolt upright and stiff as a princess in her carriage,—*her* carriage say I—yes, very pretty—young G——'s equipage it was, he himself sate in it like a caught bird in a cage,—and that perhaps made her so proud."

"G——'s carriage? G—— with them?" cried the Cornet, "and Hermina?"

"Sate there, and looked straight before her like a turkey-hen. Yes, in that girl I have been quite mistaken. I thought that it was a shame for her, and allowed my daughters to take a little care about

her and encourage her musical talent. Therese, in particular, was actually bewitched with her. But I soon found that I had committed an imprudence, and that she, as well as her family, in no respect was fit society for my daughters. All kind of strange reports are in circulation respecting these high bred gentry—they have sent themselves off in a manner——”

A servant now came in with tobacco-pipes, which he arranged in a corner of the room. The Iron-master D—— thought it as well to continue the conversation in French.

“Oui, c’est une vrai scandale,” said he, “une forgerie de tromperie ! Un vrai frippon est la fille—je sais ça—et le plus extrêmement mauvais sujet et sa père.”

“Son père,” corrected Mrs. D——, “et le pire de toute chose c’est son mère. Un conduite, oh ! Ecoute, cher Cornèt, dans Italie, le mère et le fille et la pere ——”

All at once there occurred in the next room a fearful noise, a screaming, a laughing, a tumult, a jubilation beyond all comparison. There was scraping on fiddles, there was jangling with shovels and tongs, there was singing, yelling, piping, and in the midst of this din were heard all kind of exclamations, of which this alone was intelligible:

“Papa ! Papa ! now we know the piece ! Now the scene is in order ! Hurra, hurra !”

The jubilant herd rushed now like a foaming torrent into the room; but when the wild young people beheld Cornet Carl, their delight was beyond all bounds. A universal cry was uttered:

“Iphigenie, Iphigenie! Hurra! hurra! Cornet H—— Cornet Carl, will be our Iphigenie! Hurra! Long live Iphigenie the Second, long live Cornet Iphigenie! Long live—

“Death and hell!” thought the Cornet, as the wild crowd regularly fell upon him, and endeavoured to drag him with them, amid the cry, “Come Iphigenie! Come Cornet Carl, hence, hence! We will have a rehearsal immediately! The Cornet may hold his part in his hand—come, come, only!”

“Hocus-pokus about Cornet [Carl! Fall down on your knees, and rise up as Iphigenie.”

This last was basooned forth by the sweet little Agnes D——, who stood on tiptoes to hang a veil over Cornet Carl’s head, but could not reach up to his ears. Lieutenant Ruttelin came to her assistance. Eleonora D—— and Mina P—— had already swung a large shawl over his shoulders, and three young gentlemen endeavoured to wrap him round with a sheet, which should be a gown. Among the seconds of the Misses D——, Lieutenant Arvid was also to be seen.

The Cornet resisted; it was in vain; he raised his voice, shouted to and with them,—in vain—he could not, amid the noise around him, either make himself understood, or once heard.

An actual despair out of pure vexation overcame him, and brought him to a desperate resolution. Making use of his strength, not in the most polite manner, he pushed with both arms right and left the people from him, tore off the sheet, and—ran—ran through an open door, which he saw before him, and striking into a long row of rooms, looked neither to the right nor the left, but ran, ran, ran! Ran over a servant girl, three chairs, two tables, and came at length from room to room, out into a great dining-room, on the other side of which was a porch. This the Cornet knew, and was just about hastening there, when he was aware of the jubilant herd, with the loud cry of Iphigenie, Iphigenie! who were coming through the porch to meet him. The Cornet, in the greatest distress of mind, was just about to turn round, when he saw near him a half-open door which led to a little winding staircase.

He shot down this like an arrow. It was dark and narrow,—turned and turned. It began to turn round in the head of the Cornet itself, when at length his feet reached firm land. He stood in a little dark passage. From an iron-door which stood ajar gleamed a stripe of light. The Cornet went through this door also. Through an opposite window, defended with stout iron-bars, shone a feeble and descending autumn sun, and lit up the white-grey stone walls of the vaulted room. The Cornet found himself—in a prison? —no, in a store-room.

The Cornet sought after a way of escape. There was indeed in the little passage a door, opposite to the door of the vault, but it must be opened with a key, and no key was there. The Cornet sought and sought—in vain. He sate down on a bread chest in the vault, freed himself from his shawl and veil, and heard with satisfaction how the wild chase rushed forth overhead, and seeking traces of him, drove about in the neighbourhood; but he heard them always sufficiently near, to prevent him from coming up. Unhappy, indignant, weary, embittered with the whole world, he stared before him almost without the power of thinking. A dish of confectionery, the remains of a pasty, of veal cutlets, and currant-cream, standing in the sunshine on a table, met his eye kindly and invitingly.

The Cornet experienced a strange emotion; in the midst of his despair, plagued with a thousand tormenting thoughts, he felt—hunger.

Poor human nature! O man, crown of creation! Dust-king of the dust! Is it heaven or hell, which storms within thy breast? Eat must thou nevertheless! One minute an angel, another an animal! Poor human nature!

And on the other side:

Happy human nature! Happy duality, which alone preserves the unity of the being. The animal comforts the spirit, the spirit the animal, and thus alone can the human being live.

The Cornet lived,—was hungry,—saw food, and did not long delay the satisfying of his hunger therewith. The pasty was soon added to the more substantial stuff.

Forgive! forgive, young lady reader! I know—a lover, a hero of romance in particular, ought not to be so prosaic, so earthly—and our hero is perhaps in danger of losing all your kind sympathy. But reflect, reflect charming creatures, who live on rose-odour and feelings, he was a man—and worse—a Cornet; he had had a long ride, and had not eaten a morsel the whole day. Reflect on that!

“But is it becoming to eat in this way in other peoples’ store-rooms?”

Ah, my most gracious Chief-mistress-of-ceremony! when a man is very unhappy and very much embittered, very heart-inwardly weary of the world,—then people think that every thing is becoming to them, which in any way is becoming in itself, and does not overturn anything but *convenances*. One has then an actual delight in trampling upon these, as upon other kind of weeds, and is often in that kind of state of mind, a beautiful cosmopolitan spirit, which makes one capable of saying ‘Get out of the way!’ to the whole world.

Cornet Carl had just cleared the pasty out of the way, when a tumult, increasing in strength, renewed its shrill cries after the unlucky “Iphigenie!” and a rattling and noise on the top of the stairs made known

to him that the hunting-herd spied out and were upon his track. Quite beside himself, he sprung to the window, seized with all his might one of the iron-bars, with the intention of loosening it, and, cost what it would, of making his escape.

O ray of deliverance ! The Cornet seized the key, it went into the keyhole ; and, as if chased by furies (the Cornet thought in this moment of bewilderment that all the sweet, accomplished Misses D—— had Medusa-heads), flew through a long passage out into the porch, down the steps, over the court, and upon the back of Blanka. Scarcely was he in the saddle, before, like a swarm of bees streaming out of the mouth of the beehive, the raging herd burst forth from the gate, singing, nay, screaming in chorus—

Iphigenie ! Iphigenie !
Heavens, what gross poltroonery !
Lovely maid, where art thou, then ?
Come again, O come again !

The Cornet dashed off, and soon vanished from the eyes of the chorus, behind the trees. Three young gentlemen, who, in the joyousness of their hearts, believed nothing else than that all this was merely a madly merry frolic, mounted their horses in a twinkling, and followed the fugitive.

When the Cornet saw himself again pursued, he suddenly rode more slowly, to the great astonishment of the chasing triumvirate, who speedily overtook him, and surrounded him with shrill laughter and cries.

“Aha! aha! Now we have the Cornet fast—now there is no more help. Give yourself up captive, Cornet H——, and turn round directly with us.” And one of them seized upon his horse’s bridle.

But the arm was rudely struck back; and looking stiffly and proudly upon his pursuers, the Cornet said with warmth—

“If the gentlemen had the least grain of sense, they must have seen directly that I am in anything but the humour to play and to be played with. They would now also see that all these frolics are to me disgusting. I wish them at the devil, and you with them. Leave me in peace.”

“That’s very abusively said, the thousand!” said one of the triumvirate, and put his horse at the same pace as Cornet Carl’s; whilst the other two gentlemen, standing rebuffed and taking counsel together for a moment, galloped back again amid loud laughter.

The Cornet rode gently, and looked with a keen, angry, and inquiring glance at his unbidden companion, who observed him with a pair of large, clear light blue eyes with a kind of ironical quietness.

The two silent riders now reached a cross-road. Here the Cornet turned himself proudly to his companion, and said—

“I presume that we part here; good-night, sir.”

“No,” replied the other, carelessly and ironically, “I have now a few words to say to you.”

“When and where you please,” said the Cornet, firing up.

“Hoho! hoho!” said the other, ironically; “do you take the matter so ill? Where and when you please, are indeed words which we may use as a kind of challenge—when and where one pleases to take one another’s lives. Now, for my part, that can certainly be when and where you please; but this time I do not mean it to be so serious. I only accompany you to hold a little conversation, to see whether I can enliven you a little, excite you a little—to converse with you.”

“With certain people,” said the Cornet, “I converse most willingly with the sword in my hand—that keeps at a distance.”

“Sword?” said his opponent carelessly; “Why a sword?—why not rather with a pistol? That talks louder, and serves also to keep folks at a distance. I don’t fight willingly with the sword.”

“Perhaps with pins rather,” said the Cornet, disdainfully.

“Yes, pins; or rather hair-pins,” replied his opponent smiling, as he took off his hat, and from the richest plaits of hair which ever adorned a lady’s head, drew a large hair-pin, to which he (or rather she) fastened a little note, which she reached to the Cornet, with the words, which she uttered in a very different tone—

“If you find this more painful than the point of a sword, forgive those who must bring it to you against their will.”

And the blue-eyed horsewoman, Therese D——, gave the Cornet a friendly, compassionate look, saluted him lightly, turned round her horse, and vanished quickly from his wondering eyes.

But these soon expressed another feeling, for he recognised in the address of the note the handwriting of Hermina. With feelings which one can easily imagine, the Cornet opened the letter and read the following :—

“My only friend upon earth! Farewell! farewell! If thou come, it is too late. I have been compelled to yield to my mother’s despairing prayers. To-day I set off to Stockholm. To-morrow I am Genserik’s wife—if I live till then. My brother, my friend, my all,—ah, forgive me! Farewell!

HERMINA.”

“Now to Stockholm!” said the Cornet, with desperate and firm determination to win her—or die!

“Thanks, eternal Heaven!—there yet is time.”

The evening began to be stormy and dark. The Cornet felt nothing and cared for nothing around him, but rode at full speed to the inn.

“This moment, a stout active horse!” cried the Cornet in a thundering voice; “I will pay what you will!”

In a short time a snorting steed neighed merrily under the wild rider, who with voice and spur still more excited his courage, and with the blind fury of impatience sped onward, onward, over ——; but let us take breath for a moment.

“KLA-WHIT! KLA-WHIT!”

The Corpse-Owl.

It was night. The moon's silver flood streamed quietly down over the Castle of Thorsborg, where all seemed still, because no light shone from the deep windows, speaking of a wakeful human eye, of a heart which knew no rest. Ah!—and yet——

The clear lamp of night shone into the Colonel's room, and lighted up, one after another, the gilded-framed family portraits, whose forms seemed by the pale blueish beams to come again to life, and from the night of antiquity, in whose shadows their joys and pains, hatred and love, prayer and glances, had long been extinguished, now looked forth with quiet dreamy smiles upon the combats of their living descendants with the dark powers of life, and in the spirit of these thoughts—which thought alone perceives—whisper,

Thou wilt forget, wilt be forgotten quite—
The combat of the day be hid in night;
Repose will follow when thy strife shall cease.
Spirit, keep this in mind,—and have thou peace!

Peace? Quiet, apparitions!—you wish to comfort. But there are moments when thoughts upon this word of the grave and of heaven make us shed bitter tears.

The Colonel stood in his window and looked out into the moonlight night. His lofty brow was paler than common, and dark fire beamed in his deep-set eyes.

A storm-wind raged now and again through the court-yard, and carried along with it heaps of yellow leaves, which struck up a whirling dance before the old rock-firm building, and reminded one of courtiers, who tried to amuse their dark glancing prince. The flag-staff on the tower swung round gratingly, and an uneasy, anxious whistling, such as in stormy weather one hears in great buildings, passed lamentingly here and there through the castle. This sound was worthy to be the messenger of misfortune; it distressed the hearer like melancholy forebodings. White clouds, of strange, fantastical shapes, were driven over the heavens, and resembled hosts flying forth with torn banners. They wrapped a storm-sail over the queen of night, who nevertheless quickly broke through it with conquering beams, and at length they assembled themselves in dark grey masses lower down on the horizon.

The Colonel contemplated with uneasy and gloomy feelings the wild conflicts of nature. He bitterly felt that the spirit of discontent with his poisonous breath disturbed also the peace of his hitherto so happy and

united family. *He*, who loved his own family so dearly, who was so tenderly beloved by them in return, he was now all at once become as it were a stranger to them. Wife, children, removed themselves from him—turned their faces away from him; and it was his fault; he had refused their prayers; they were unhappy through him; and at this moment, when his conscience bore witness that he had firmly adhered to his principles of right—that, without wavering, he had acted up to his severe but lofty ideas—in this moment painful feelings arose in his heart, which seemed to accuse him of having erred in their application, and thereby, that he had caused suffering which he might have prevented—that he had embittered the days of those beings whom he was called upon to make happy and to bless. A physical sensation of pain, which was peculiar to him, and which he mostly perceived when his soul was painfully excited—a spasm of the chest, which made breathing difficult, was now more than commonly acute during these gloomy thoughts. He felt himself solitary; no one, at this moment, felt tenderness towards him; nobody's thoughts hovered above him on the peace-bringing dove-wings of prayer; he was solitary! A tear forced itself to his manly eye, and he looked up on high with a dark wish soon to leave a world where pain ruled.

A white cloud, which bore the form of a human being with outstretched arms floated alone, along the

starry vault; it appeared to descend lower and lower, and the outstretched misty arms seemed to approach the Colonel. He thought upon Elisabeth—upon her love—on her promise to be with him after death. Was it not as if her spirit would now embrace him? Was it not her apparition which now, when every affectionate voice was silent around him, descended that she might solitarily call to him through the night, I love thee! I love thee!

Nearer and nearer came the ghost-like appearance; the eye of the Colonel followed it with melancholy longing, and almost unconsciously he raised his arms towards it. Then was it suddenly snatched up by the storm-wind,—the extended arms were rent from the misty body, and in broken, wild flames, like a mysterious fantasy, the white cloud passed by above the turrets of the tower. Space was desolate. The Colonel laid his hand upon his breast,—it was desolate there. Some deep sighs laboured forth from its painful recesses. At this bitter moment some one approached him with soft footsteps—an arm stole under his, a hand was laid familiarly and tenderly upon his hand, and he felt a head lean softly upon his shoulder. He looked not around—he questioned not—he knew that *she* now was near him, who for so many years had shared with him joy and pain; she alone could divine his hidden pain,—she alone in the silent night came to him with consolation and love. He laid his arm quietly around the companion

of his life, and held her closely to his breast, when soon both the inward and outward pain allayed themselves. Thus stood the wedded pair for long, and saw the storm travel over the earth and chase amid the clouds. They said not one word in explanation of that which had occurred, not one word of excuse. What need was there of it? *Reconciliation* clasped them to its heavenly breast. They stood heart throbbing to heart, they were *one*.

The storm which increased every moment, moved with raging wings the tower-bell, which had just struck twelve. The dull strokes of the bell were perceived. The Colonel held his wife closer to his breast, who at this moment was thrilled by an involuntary tremor. She looked up to her husband. His eye was immovably riveted upon one single point, and hers, following in the same direction, remained still and immovable like his.

On the road, which was visible from this side, almost in a straight line to a considerable distance from the building, a black body was moving along, which, as it approached the castle, assumed every moment a larger size and a more extraordinary form. Before long they could distinguish by the light of the moon, that it consisted of several persons, who in a particular manner seemed held together, and as it were moved together very slowly, but altogether in a body. Now it was hidden by the trees of the avenue—now again it was in sight and much nearer.

Several men seemed to be carrying something heavy with great care.

"It is a funeral procession!" whispered her Honour.

"Impossible! at this hour!" replied the Colonel.

Nearer and nearer came the dark mass. Now it entered the court. The wind blew wildly and bestrewed it with withered leaves, and took with it the hats from the heads of several of the bearers, but none of them went to seek after them. The procession advanced right forward to the principal building. Now it ascended the steps—so softly, so carefully; blows thundered at the door,—all was silent and still for a moment,—the door opened and the train entered the house. Without saying a word the Colonel left his wife and went hastily out of the room, the door of which he locked, and sprang down stairs. The bearers had set down their burden between the pillars of the hall. It was a bier. A dark cloak covered it. The bearers stood around with uncertain and dejected countenances.

"Who have you there?" asked the Colonel, in a voice which as it seemed that he had not the power to prevent trembling. No one replied. The Colonel went nearer, and lifted up the covering. The moon shone through the lofty gothic windows down upon the bier. A bloody corpse lay there. The Colonel recognised his son.

O paternal pain! Cover with your wings, ye

angels of heaven, your smiling countenances, look not down upon a father's pain! Be extinguished, extinguished, ye beaming lights of the firmament! Come dark night, and with thy holy veil, hide from all eyes that pang which has no tears, has not a word. O never can human eye penetrate a father's pain!

Noble and unfortunate father! when we saw thy eyes fixed upon thy son, we turned away ours—but thou hadst our fervent prayers.

All the domestics were, together with myself, put in motion by the arrival of the message of misfortune, we all stood dumb around the bier. At a motion of the Colonel, and the words, “a surgeon!” every one was in activity. A messenger set off directly to the city to fetch a skilful surgeon and one well known to the family, and the lifeless body was lifted from the bier, and carried to a chamber. The tears of the bearers fell upon the body of their beloved young master. The Colonel and I followed the slow mournful procession. I dared not look at him, but heard the deep almost rattling sighs by which he breathed with the greatest difficulty.

When the body was laid upon a bed, they began, almost without hope, eagerly to make use of all means which are available to revive a fainting or swooning person. The feet were brushed, the breast, the temples, and palms of the hands, were rubbed with spirit. Blood now began to run slowly from a wound in the head; it was bound up. Busied with the feet,

I ventured an anxious, inquiring look at the Colonel—but turned it away again hastily with horror. He was the colour of death—a spasm had drawn together and disfigured his features. The lips were closely compressed, the eyes fixed.

All at once I felt, as it were, a light tremor pass through the stiffened limbs which my hands touched. I scarcely breathed. It was repeated—I looked up to the Colonel.

The one hand he held tight upon his breast—the other he conveyed to his son's mouth. He seized mine and led it there. A faint breath seemed to come from it. A feeble throbbing moved on the temples; a sigh, the first salutation of reviving life, heaved the breast, and a faint tinge of life spread itself over the face. The Colonel looked up to heaven. O with what an expression! O fatherly gladness! thou art worth being purchased with pain. Look down, O angels of heaven, into the blessed father's heart! It is a sight for you.

Now the slumbering eyes opened, and mirrored themselves in the father's look, which, with the highest expression of anxious gladness, rested upon him. They remained thus fixed for a moment, and then softly closed again. The Colonel, terrified, placed his hand again upon his son's mouth, to ascertain if the breathing were weaker than before; then the lips moved themselves to a kiss upon the paternal hand, and an expression full of peace and reconciliation

spread itself over the young man's countenance. He continued to lie immovable, with his eyes closed as of one sleeping. The breath was drawn feebly, and he made no effort to speak.

When the prudent and affectionate Helena sate beside me on her brother's bed, the Colonel left us to seek for his wife. He beckoned to me to follow him, and I sprang up stairs, pinching my cheeks the while that I might not look like a messenger of death. Her Honour sate motionless, with her hands clasped together; and, in the moonlight, was not unlike one of the pale ghosts of antiquity which glanced around her in a silent family circle. When we entered, she said to us with quiet anguish,—“Something has happened! What has happened? Tell me—tell me every thing!”

With admirable calmness, with inward tenderness, the Colonel prepared his wife for that which awaited her; and endeavoured, at the same time, to inspire her with a consolation and a hope, greater, certainly, than he himself cherished. After this, he led her into the sick-room. Without speaking a single word, without uttering a sound, without letting fall a tear, the unhappy mother went up to her son, who now appeared to me nearer to death than at first. The Colonel stood now at the foot of the bed, and preserved his manly, powerful deportment; but when he saw his wife softly lay her head down upon her son's bloody pillow, and with all a mother's love and

a mother's indescribable expression of pain kiss his pale lips, and the uncommon likeness of both countenances became now more striking amid the mournful shadow of death, which seemed, as it were, to rest upon both—then he bowed down his head, hid his face with his hands, and wept like a child. Ah! we all wept bitterly. It seemed to us as if the spark of hope, which was just kindled, was extinguished—and nobody thought that the mother could survive the son.

And yet, human cares, gnawing pain, sharp sword, which pierces through the inmost of the soul—you kill not. The wonderful seed of life can nourish itself even with sorrow—can, like the polypus, be cut asunder and grow together again, and endure, and suffer. Sorrowing mothers, wives, brides, daughters, sisters—womanly hearts, which sorrow always strikes deepest and breaks, you bear witness to this. You have seen your beloved die—have believed that you died with them—and yet you lived, and could not die. But what do I say? If you live, if you are able to submit yourselves to life, is it not because a breeze from a higher region has infused comfort and strength into your soul? Can I doubt of it, and think of the noble Thilda R——, the mourning bride of the noblest husband? Thou didst receive his last sigh—with him thou lost all upon earth—thy future was dark and joyless,—and yet thou wast so resigned, so gentle, so friendly, so good!

Thou didst weep; but saidst consolingly to sympathising friends, "Trust me—it is not so difficult." O then they understood that there was a consolation which the world gives not. And when thou, endeavouring to mitigate thy pain, saidst "I will not make him uneasy by my grief," who could doubt that *he* whose happiness on the other side of the grave thou soughtest to preserve, was near thee, and surrounded thee with his love, and strengthened thee, and comforted thee?

"And there appeared to her an angel of heaven, and strengthened her."

Patient sufferers, hail to you! You reveal the kingdom of God upon earth, and shew us the way to heaven. From the crown of thorns upon your heads we see eternal roses bloom forth.

But I return to the inconsolable mother, whom the first unexpected blow of misfortune had overpowered. She collected herself—to go through a long time of trial, for her beloved wavered a long time between life and death. She herself failed of strength and resolution properly to attend upon him. Had it not been for Helena, had it not been for the Colonel, and had it not been (I shame to say it) for me—then;—but now we were all there, and therefore (through the mercy of God) the Cornet remained—alive.

In times of sorrow and mourning, souls become united. When outward misfortunes assail us—then

we draw one towards another, and it is for the most part when watered by the tears of pain, that the most beautiful flowers of friendship and devotion grow up. Within the family, a common misfortune mostly effaces all little contentions and misunderstandings, to unite all minds, all interests in one point. In particular when death threatens a beloved member, then are silenced all discords in the family circle, then only harmonious, even if they be mournful feelings, move all hearts, attune all thoughts, and form a happy garland of peace, within whose bosom the beloved invalid reposes.

After this occurrence with Cornet Carl, and during the course of his illness, all unpleasantness, all constraint in the H—— family vanished; every care, every feeling, every thought, united themselves around him, and when his life was out of danger, when he began to enjoy himself—O how vividly they felt; how highly they loved one another!—and what an indescribable necessity there was to make one another happy; how they feared in any way to darken the brightening heaven!

It was extremely affecting to me,—but I cannot imagine what is come to me to-day that I wish to touch the heart so much—and to make my readers weep, both at my sorrow and at my joy,—as if there did not fall useless tears enough in the urn of sensibility,—or as if I myself had become regularly low-spirited with the H—— family. Let us therefore

pay a flying visit to the D—— family, and see whether we cannot amuse ourselves a little. Through the power of my magic-wand (the most miserable goose-quill on earth), we will now betake ourselves, that is to say, my reader and me, for a moment to

LÖFSTAHOLM.

BREAKFAST was in. The table was full of people. Upon the table stood bowls, and skåls were proposed.

"The thousand fetch me!" said a voice (which the reader perhaps recognises), "if I have not a desire to drain the cup to the very dregs once more in a skål to Miss Eleonora!"

A lively neighbour, as red as a peony, said, kindly admonishing, "What would Julie H—— say to it?"

"Julie H——. The thousand fetch me! I don't trouble myself about that which Julie H—— says. Miss Julie may see what she has occasioned with her caprices. It would please me, fetch me the thousand! some fine day to send back her betrothal-ring. Yes, yes!"

"Skål—Arvid!" cried Lieutenant Ruttelin, "a skål for independent men!"

"And for their friends!" cried the little Lord Byron. "I mean their lady friends," whispered he

to Eleonora—"But it will not do for the rhyme's sake—do you understand?"

"Yes, I don't trouble myself much about that," she replied.

"Lieutenant Arvid! Lieutenant Arvid P——, I have the honour to drink skål to you!" exclaimed the Ironmaster D——.

"And I, and I, and I!" repeated many voices.

"Fill up your neighbour's glass, Eleonora!"

"Ladies and Gentlemen! I propose a skål for Lieutenant Arvid's bride—that she may bethink herself, and what belongs to her happiness—and take him again into favour."

CHORUS.

"Yes, that she may ——"

A VOICE.

"Ladies and Gentlemen—the thousand fetch me! ladies and gentlemen—that is an affair—fetch me the thousand! about which I don't trouble myself. I have a great desire not to be taken into favour again—I—but—but to—yes, to send back her betrothal-ring—the thousand fetch me!"

CHORUS.

"Skål for independent men! Skål for Lieutenant Arvid!"

“And skål for girls without caprices; skål for my Eleonora and her sisters!” cried the Iron master D——.

CHORUS.

“Skål, Skål!”

“Drain the bowl!” added the little Lord Byron, with a grimace.

TEA AND SUPPER.

I have just had the honour of seeing my readers at a little déjeuner; I now pray for the honour of entertaining them at a little supper. Nay, nay, do not be frightened! It will not be great, nor grand; nor will it be like a rousing up of his Excellence *Ennui*, nor will keep you up in wakeful pain beyond midnight.

I cover a little round table in the blue boudoir at Thorsborg. In the middle of the table Helena has placed a large basket of grapes, and wreathed it with asters, gilliflowers, and other flowers which still retain their hues under the pale beams of the autumn sun. Around the Bacchus crown are arranged those simple dishes, of which one finds mention made in the legend of Philemon and Baucis, as well as in all idyls where suppers are talked of. I shall waste, therefore, no paper by the enumeration of milk and cream and other pastoral dishes.* Her Honour

* Ah, heaven have mercy on me! It comes now clearly into my mind that Baucis, when the unexpected strangers arrived, ran out in order to sacrifice to their entertainment her only goose. And I, who

would perhaps not forgive me for passing over in silence a dish of honey-cake, from which flowed an aromatic juice, as well as a great tart (to the perfecting of which she had lent a hand) filled with plums—more light, enticing, and delicate than one can—the Colonel, it is true, declared that when he had eaten a piece it lay rather heavy on his stomach,—but, as her Honour, after a little vexation, said, “one does not know what oppresses some folks. Gentlemen have such curious ideas!”

At that very moment, for which I pray the attention of my kind reader, her Honour left off rubbing, for the fifth time, a speck from a water-bottle, which in the end she discovered to be a peculiarity in the glass itself, and therefore, alas, immoveable! At this moment there assembled by degrees, in the room, lighted mildly by a lamp, Julie (without the betrothal-ring), Professor L——, the Magister with his pupils, and, last of all, entered, between his father and Helena, Cornet Carl, who for the first time since the fall from his horse joined the family circle during the evening hours. Her Honour went to meet him with tears in her eyes, kissed him, and allowed herself no rest till she had seated him on the sofa, between the Colonel and herself, comfortably supported by soft cushions, which she even would place around his head in such a manner as if it could only

have invited so many strangers to supper, can treat them neither with goose, calf, nor turkey! I am ashamed of myself, up to the eyes!

be sustained by the help of winged cherubs. The Colonel observed too, with sweet roguish pleasure, and a laconic "Ay! ay!" how the cushions tumbled to right and left. Her Honour declared that the Colonel blew them. When she had settled them to her mind, she seated herself silently, and contemplated, with a tender, pensive smile, the pale countenance of her son, whilst tears, which she herself did not observe, rolled slowly down her cheeks. The Colonel looked at her so long with a mild serious eye, that at length she was aroused by its expression to attention to herself, and she immediately conquered her emotion, that she might not disturb the rest of her beloved invalid.

It was delightful to see how the little Dumplings, with looks full of appetite, and open mouths, brought to their sick brother of the good things with which Helena had loaded the table, and how indescribably difficult it was for them to resign the plates. Julie knelt before her brother, and chose, from a dish which she had set upon the sofa, the largest and most beautiful grapes, which she gave to him.

I had almost a mind to ask Professor L—— what book it was which he read so devotedly and with such attention. He would either have answered "Julie," or he would have looked a little confused, and have turned to the title-page of the book, which would have looked very suspicious, namely, as regarded the reading of the book.

In the looks of the greater part of the little company, this evening, there was a something very unusual,—a constraint, a liveliness, a something, in a word, like that which sparkles in the eyes of children when they on Christmas-eve expect the arrival of the Christmas-goat.

Cornet Carl alone was dejected and silent: the indifferent, feeble expression of his eyes testified of a joyless heart; and although he replied mildly and kindly to all the evidences of affection which were heaped upon him, there was a something so mournful, even in his smile, that it called forth tears afresh in the eyes of her Honour.

In the mean time the Magister went fishing after somebody who would play chess with him. He had more than once set out the chess-pieces on the board, and turned it round, and coughed at least seven times, to give a sort of signal that opponents desirous of battle might now announce themselves. But as no combatant presented himself, he set out now on a crusade to seek out such, and challenge them. Professor L——, who saw himself first threatened with a challenge, stuck his nose so solemnly into his book, that the Magister lost courage to venture the attempt, and turned to Julie, who fled to the other end of the room. After that, he was about to try Helena, but she was so occupied with serving at table;—now he came up to me with a determined countenance. “I must,” I said, “go and see whe-

ther we shall have moonlight this evening." We had last night the moon in the wane.

The poor Magister at last, with a deep sigh, threw a glance on the little Dumplings, who were just now seizing upon the tart, and admonished them to make good speed, as he was thinking of shewing them the movements of the chess-pieces.

The Colonel, who blew his tea, and who with a smile observed the movements of the little company, now raised his voice, and said, giving to every word an unusual emphasis,—

"I have been told to-day that Lieutenant Arvid P—— has sought from Eleonora D—— (and has found it too) consolation for the instability of a certain young lady."

O how Julie crimsoned. Professor L—— dropped his book to the floor.

"I fancy," continued the Colonel, "that this may be very good. Eleonora D—— is, I believe, a clever girl, who knows what she is about, and understands how to take the best side of others. Arvid P—— is a good match for her, and she is a good match for Arvid. I wish them all possible happiness."

"I too!" said Julie half-aloud, and stole towards her father, delighted to discover in his words an acquiescence in the dissolution of her betrothal. She looked at him a moment, with an expression in which hope, joy, tenderness, and doubt alternated; but when his eye, full of fatherly gentleness, met hers, she threw

her arms around his neck, and gave him more kisses than I could count.

Professor L—— threw his arms around himself (with the mind probably of embracing somebody), and contemplated the beautiful group with a look—oh, how eloquent is a look sometimes!

“Give me a glass of wine, Beata!” exclaimed the Colonel, “I will drink a joyful and joy-bringing skål. A glass of Swedish wine of course!”

(Friendly reader, it was berry-wine he meant—and which he called for me to bring him. Forgive this little boasting.)

I gave it to the Colonel.

“Skål to thee, my son Carl!” cried he, with a beaming glance.

At this moment harmoniously sounded a fine harp—accord from the next room. An electrical thrill seemed to go through everybody in our room, and a sort of illumination kindled up all eyes. The Cornet was about to start up, but was held back by his father, who laid his arm round him; whilst her Honour, in anxiety of his evidently violent emotions, threw upon him more eau de Cologne than was reasonable or agreeable. To this harp—accord followed another, and yet another. Thus, like the delicious odours of a spring morning, there gushed forth by degrees an enchanting stream of beautiful and pure melody, which now rose, now sunk, with infinite delight, and which penetrated so beautifully

the inmost of the heart, that one might have said that the finger of an angel touched these strings. To these tones was soon united a voice even still more delightful. A young female voice, pure, clear, and melodious, which trembled in the beginning, but by degrees acquired more and more certainty, and sang with more and more enchanting expression:—

Remember'st thou the moment when
Thy heart a heart had found,
And wert so blessed—and love's flame burned,
And lit life's barren ground?

It was so sweet, it was so bright,
The world was all so fair,
Each thought bore up to heaven's height
Our gratitude and prayer.

Then came a time, whose bitter woe
Did soul from soul compel,
And sadly passed from tongue to tongue
A trembling fare thee well!

Farewell all joy which earth can give,
Farewell all pleasure here!
Farewell, my friend! O care is o'er,
See all again is clear!

See, thy beloved is near to thee;
Meets thee with blissful heart,
And whispers, "I am ever thine,
We never more shall part!"

What did the Cornet do in the mean time? A firework of joy and rapture flashed from his eyes. His feet moved, he stretched forth his arms; but withheld by the arm, by the prayer and eye of his father, he could not rise from the sofa. The soul

also soothed its vehemence during the song; feelings of quiet happiness seemed to possess his soul, and he looked up to the ceiling with a look as if he saw heaven open.

Her Honour, who in the mean time had gone out, returned at the close of the song, leading by the hand the enchanting singer—the angelically beautiful Hermina. The Colonel rose, and went to meet them. With real fatherly affection he embraced the charming creature, and presented her solemnly to the company as his fourth beloved daughter.

Let nobody blame the Cornet that he did not instantly spring up and throw himself on his knees before his beloved. He really could not do it. The feeling of transporting happiness was too strong for his exhausted strength, and a transient faintness overcame him at the moment when he saw, on the hand of his mother, that beloved being enter the room whom he had believed to be lost for ever. Her Honour now emptied over him her whole bottle of eau de Cologne.

As he again opened his eyes he met those of Hermina, which, full of affection and tears, rested upon him. The Colonel took the hands of the young lovers and united them. The whole family closed in a circle around the happy pair. Words were not spoken; but those looks, those smiles, full of love and bliss—O how much better they are than words!

PROBABLE CHORUS OF MY READERS.

BUT how? But what? But why? But when? How came it about? How did it go on?

I shall have the honour, methodically and orderly, as is becoming to a House-counsellor, on this subject to give my

EXPLANATION.

When a jelly has nearly finished boiling, one throws into it white-of-egg (as is said in artistical phrase) to clear it.* So also, when a novel, little story, or literary composition of any kind, approaches its completion, then one throws in an explication or explanation, to get rid of the sediment; and this is generally much of the quality of white of egg, namely, is sticky and cementing, clear and clarifying, and tolerably insipid.

I see already what faces will be made over my white-of-egg chapter, and am myself rather uneasy

* The reader is respectfully requested to recollect that the House-counsellor's good fortune, or ascent, was prepared or boiled up in a wine-jelly. Now, therefore, in grateful memory of the offspring of hartshorn, she serves up therewith a dessert.

and anxious about it, and think it will be best, instead of my own written word, to give my reader part of a conversation which one fine November afternoon took place between Mrs. D—— and Mrs. Mellander, who was her's, as well as the whole neighbourhood's newspaper and advertising gazette; but in order to spare my reader the mistakes and conjectures of the two ladies, I will, unknown to Mrs. M—— and Mrs. D——, introduce a prompter on the scene; that is to say, a breath of the spirit of truth, which, whether it passes over the field of the history of the world, or through the smallest chink in the door of domestic life, is an important, always dear-bought auxiliary or assistant. My prompter is besides unlike him who is engaged at our royal theatres, in this, that he prompts not the actors, but the spectators to the right track. But to the affair.

The scene is at Löfstaholm, in Mrs. D——'s boudoir.

(Mrs. D—— sits over the afternoon coffee. Mrs. Mellander comes in).

MRS. D.

Nay, my sweet Mrs. Mellander, nay at length—welcome! I have waited almost half-an-hour. The coffee is almost cold—I must certainly have it warmed.

MRS. M.

Heaven forbid! my little, your Honour—cold or warm is good enough for me.

MRS. D.—(*as she serves her*).

Now Mrs. Mellander, now, what news?

MRS. M.

Ay, your Honour, now I am, thank God, clear about all—a bit more sugar—if you please.

MRS. D.

Nay, tell me, tell me, then! I have heard say that the little wood-beak yonder,—Hermina, is adopted by the H—— Family as their own child—that she and Cornet Carl are betrothed—and that there soon will be a wedding.

PROMPTER.

Not for three years, says Colonel H——. The Cornet must first travel, and look about him in the world; and Hermina (her Honour says) must first learn Swedish rural economy, and that of itself will require three years.

MRS. M.

It seemed to me that somebody was talking near us;—are we alone?

MRS. D.

Not a Christian soul can hear us.

MRS. M.

Nay, then I shall tell your Honour a horrible story—but see—I will not have it said that I told it.

MRS. D.

Not a Christian soul shall know of it.

[The prompter whistles.]

MRS. M.

Well then! It runs so. In the beginning, the present Baroness K—— was in foreign parts married to a Swedish nobleman, who was called something of Stjern—and had by him a daughter—no other than that handsome young Hermina; about whom neither father nor mother troubled themselves greatly—because, do you see, they wished to have had a son, and the girl must have had a sad time of it at home. Now—in the mean time comes Baron K—— there abroad—into—Taly—or whatever the country is called—and sees the handsome lady, Hermina's mother—falls madly in love with her, and she is over head and ears in love with him. Her husband was aware of it—there was a horrible disturbance in the house, and the two gentlemen got to fighting.

PROMPTER.

A duel.

THE W.

THE H— was the Baron K— was obliged to leave the country. He returned now to Sweden, and lived there in a wild & giddy life, gambled and took in all his affairs till in disorder. One day he met the husband of the handsome lady whom he had seduced, and thought to get a handsome wife and with the handsome wife's money to pay his debts. Now—he married the widow—he was to be a man—he married him in privacy, thinking afterwards to get the forgiveness of her old husband—but he was a rich and high-bred personage) he soon turned his back against her and disinherited her. Then—the new-married took had nothing to live upon in foreign lands. Now—then they came handsomely home, and in the very morning the trading-house in which was the remainder of K—'s property became bankrupt—and now spring the creditors from all sides upon him, and he was obliged regularly to hide himself from them: therefore he lived in that time of his life there, and would let neither dog nor cat see him: and when perchance people came there, he was as mad as a wild bull—and was angry with his wife, whom he suspected had enticed the people there. Yes,—it must have been an unhappy and miserable life.

MRS. D.

But how came young H— there?

Mrs. M.

Yes, heaven knows that!—that I have not been able rightly to get at—but there he came—and the two young folks fell in love with each other. About the same time also there came there the handsome, rich Law-commissioner G——, and fell in love, too, with the little Hermina.

Mrs. D.

That is altogether incomprehensible! The girl is altogether not handsome—no *fraicheur*, no colour.

Mrs. M.

Ah! what is she beside the sweet Miss D——s? Like a radish beside beet-roots.

Mrs. D. (*offended.*)

Mrs. M—— means probably roses.

PROMPTER,

Peonies.

Mrs. M.

Yes,—I mean so exactly,—of course. Where was I just now? I have it. Nay—the young H—— travelled in the mean time, and remained away the whole summer, and the Law-commissioner went continually to K——'s, and made himself agreeable. One fine day he was there courting—and what do you

think? Hermina would not have him—and gave him a direct no. Nay, there was a disturbance in the house!

MRS. D.

The girl always seemed to me a romantic fool.

MRS. M.

In the autumn all Baron K——'s creditors set upon him and would have money, or would take him to prison. Your Honour sees the affair was this, that he during the summer had secretly visited Stockholm, and gambled and won, and therewith had maintained the housekeeping and kept off the creditors for a time. But all at once his luck took a turn, and he came into horrible difficulty. He then swore a deep oath, and said to Law-commissioner G——, "Pay for me ten thousand rix-dollars—and you shall have Hermina for your wife." And he replied, "As soon as she is my wife, I will pay the money on the morrow." The Baron would at first terrify Hermina into saying, "Yes." But it would not do. He then threw himself on his knees before her and prayed, and the Baroness did so too—and the girl cried, and said merely, "Give me three days time." The parents would not, but were obliged to submit; and during these days she wrote to Cornet H—— that he must come to her hand-over-head —

PROMPTER.

Not verbally correct.

Mrs. D.

—— that he should pay the sum of money, and have her for wife.

PROMPTER.

She did not write so.

Mrs. D.

An intriguing thing!

Mrs. M.

Yes, truly! Nay—the Cornet came home quite beside himself; wished to have the money from his father, who said—no.

Mrs. M.

Yes, yes; the old ones are all covetous. Nay, the rest I know. There was a dispute between father and son. Mrs. H—— got into it—they said foolish things to one another.

PROMPTER.

False!

Mrs. M.

Yes; it became a regular family quarrel. The Cornet rode away desperate—came to the place in the wood,—found the K——s gone, was as if out of his mind, rode hither and thither the whole day, and met at last with an acquaintance whom he challenged.

PROMPTER.

False!

MRS. D.

Yes—and was carried home at night, as if dead, to his parents. But which way had K——s taken?

MRS. M.

That was in this way. There came people out who positively would seize upon Baron K——. Then he and the Baroness assailed Hermina with prayers—so that she, out of anguish of heart, said yes to anything. Law-commissioner G—— talked to the creditors, and promised to pay them in a few days. And so he conducted Hermina to Stockholm, that there on the following Sunday the banns might be published once for all, and directly afterwards they be married; all was to be done secretly, and in haste, because every one, and the Law-commissioner in particular, was afraid of young H——.

MRS. D.

But how came it that there was no marriage?

MRS. M.

Ay, because Hermina became ill, and nearly half mad, like Clamentina in Grandson (a novel, your Honour knows), and she was about to put an end to her life.

PROMPTER.

False!

MRS. D.

How wicked!

MRS. M.

Her mother then became anxious, and sent a messenger to Colonel H——, with whom she had formerly been very well acquainted.

PROMPTER.

False! false! false!

As the prompter seems of the three speakers to be the one who knows best the progress of the pair (probably because he holds the manuscript in his hands), thus he may step down upon the stage, and endeavour to disentangle that which he is as capable of describing, as the others of relating falsely.

PROMPTER.

My gracious ladies and gentlemen, the affair is this: Hermina's suffering of soul, against which she had so long combated, brought on, during the days permitted to her, a sort of still insanity, which terrified all those around her. Genserik G——, who discovered in Stockholm how desperate K——'s affairs were, and who plainly perceived Hermina's dislike to

him, withdrew from the game, and vanished all at once, without any one knowing where he was gone. Baron K—— saw quickly that nothing could save him from ruin, and determined to fly, and his wife to accompany him. It was in this moment of hopelessness, when a new star ascended for the unhappy husband and wife. They approached each other,—they wept together—a veil of oblivion was dropped over the past—they promised to support one another through the weary journey of life—their earlier love awoke, and allowed them to hope, that if they preserved its fire, they might even in the depths of misery find some happiness. The heart of the Baroness, whose ice-suffering appeared to have broken, bled for Hermina, and shuddered for her fate, of having to wander around the world with her unhappy parents as a prey to want and misery. One evening as she sat observing the lovely, pale girl consumed with care and suffering of mind, who now lay in a quiet slumber, she knew that her heart was breaking, and subduing her feeling of pride, she seized her pen and wrote the following lines to Colonel H——'s lady—

“A despairing mother calls upon the mercy of a mother. In four-and-twenty hours I shall leave Stockholm, to fly out of Sweden. My daughter I cannot and will not take with me. I will not see her become a prey to misery—for it is misery which I go to meet. Your estimable character, the kindness

which I have myself seen beam from your countenance, has given me courage to turn myself to you with this prayer. O! (if you heard my trembling lips utter it—if you saw in my breast the broken and repentant mother's heart—you would listen to my prayers); receive, receive my child into your house, into your family! In mercy receive her! Take my Hermina under your protection—take her as maid to your daughters—for that, at least, the grand-daughter of the Marquis Azavello might be suitable. Now she is weak and ill—weak in body and mind—she is not good for much now—but have patience with her,—ah! I feel—I become bitter, and—I must be humble! Forgive me! and if you will save me from despair—hasten—hasten hither like an angel of consolation, and clasp my pitiable child in your protecting arms. Then will I bless you and pray for you; O may you never know a moment as bitter as this!

EUGENIA A——.”

This letter was received by Mrs. H—— some days after her son's accident. She shewed it to the Colonel. Both of them immediately set off to Stockholm, and returned with Hermina, who from this moment received from them the affection of parents, and who soon in the atmosphere of peace and love which surrounded her, bloomed forth as lovely as she was happy.

[*Exit PROMPTER to make room for BEATA HVAR-DAGSLAG, who looks very much disposed to talk.*

Few people upon the theatre of life love the dumb parts. Every one wishes to come forward in his place to say something, even were it nothing more than "I am called Peter"—or "I am called Paul, look at me! or listen to me!" and as I, Beata Hvardagslag, will not do myself the injustice to appear more discreet than I am, therefore I again step forward and say, "listen to me."

Baron K—— vanished hastily with his wife out of Sweden. They took their way towards Italy, where the Baroness wished to make another attempt at a reconciliation with her father. They expected during this journey to have to struggle with every difficulty which want and poverty can occasion; but it was otherwise for them. In many places on the way they found, quite incomprehensibly, that they were provided for by some person quite unknown to them. In different cities lay sums of money ready for them to take up,—a good angel seemed to attend and watch over them. The Baroness's letter to her daughter contained these tidings.

"It is all my husband's work," said her Honour to me one day, with a beaming expression of pride, affection, and joy. "K—— was his enemy during his youth, and had done him many wrongs. Although since that time they have been altogether separated, I know that my husband has not forgotten it—because he cannot forget it—but such is his revenge. He is a noble man—God bless him!"

I said "Amen!"

THE LAST SCHEME.

August, 1830.

THE widowed Provostess, Mrs. Bobina Bult, sate in her travelling carriage, with the reins and whip in her firm hands. Round about her were packed, in hay, a mass of eatables in bags and tubs; in the middle, among these, her good friend, C. B. Hvardagslag.

The August evening was mild and beautiful, the way was good, the horse cheerful; and yet Mrs. Bobina's set-out looked shabby; for before her went an empty cart, driven by a young peasant lad, who seemed to have made up his mind to try her patience, as he drove, step by step, with her carriage, preventing us from passing him; because, when we turned to the right, he turned to the right; and when we to the left, and tried to get past him, he was there before us. And all the while he sang with a full throat, songs on most disagreeable subjects; looked often round at us, and laughed scornfully. I looked up to Mrs. Provostess Bobina Bult—for I am, alas! a little lady,

and she is tall grown, and straight and powerful as a house-beam,—and I remarked how her under-lip projected in a manner which I knew to betide anger. I saw her chin and the point of her nose grow of a crimson colour, and her little grey eyes shoot out arrows of vengeance. Many a time did we, both by good and bad words, admonish the boy to leave the road free, but in vain. Provostess Bobina bit her lip, gave me the reins without saying a word, jumped out of the car, took some prodigious strides, and stood, one, two, three, beside our tormentor; seized him with a strong hand by the collar, dragged him out of his cart, laid him on the ground before he had time to think about resistance, and gave him, with the heavy handle of her whip, some blows upon the back, while she asked him whether he would beg pardon and mend, or prove still farther the strength of her arm. Probably he was already sufficiently convinced of its unusual strength, for he was speedily humble and repentant, and promised all that one wished. Provostess Bult allowed him now to get up, and gave him a short but powerful penance-sermon; the conclusion of which was so beautiful that it moved me, moved herself, and even the peasant lad, who wiped the tears from his eyes with his hat-brim. “I know thee,” added Mrs. Bobina, “thou art from the parish of Aminne; thy father has long been sick; thou canst come to me at Löffby on Monday morning, and have something for him.”

We now drove on unimpededly, but had now and then a detention by the way. In one place, we helped an old woman who had been upset with her cart; in another place, the Lady Provostess dismounted to release, with much difficulty, a great pig which had set itself fast in a hedge, and whose lamentable cry went to the very innermost of the heart.

At the down-going of the sun, we saw its beams salute Löfby. Small columns of smoke rose corkscrew-like from the cottage chimneys, dispersed themselves in the clear evening air, and united themselves in a light transparent cloud, which, like a rose-coloured gauze veil, floated over the village, which, with its pretty houses, green gardens, and its murmuring, clear river, presented a charming view, as we slowly drove down an easily-descending hill, which quickly branched out into two arms; one of which carried us to our home, lying some fifty paces from the village.

The cows came in long rows from the pasture meadows to be milked, with jingling bells and peaceful lowing. Wood-horns sounded, peasant girls sang with clear and shrill voices; and to this sound was united the bing-bong of the church bells, which sung on the Saturday evening, "Good-night" to the week, and announced the day of rest. Mrs. Bobina Bult's countenance was joyful and solemn. Everybody greeted her kindly and reverentially, and kindly did she greet everybody. When we had arrived at our

little school, the swarm of children broke forth from the house amid sounding cries of joy, and embraced her with unbounded rapture and affection. Caresses and gingerbread were divided among all.

Many things now took up the time of Provostess Bobina. One girl had just began to weave a web, another had just finished hers—these the Provostess must see.

A servant man had cut his leg; the Lady Provostess must bind it up: a little sick boy in a neighbouring yard could not rest (so his mother said) till he had seen the Lady Provostess. A dear married couple had fallen out, and agreed that the Lady Provostess should settle things between them,—and so on, and so on.

First of all Mrs. Bobina talked with all her scholars; prayed with them all; wept with one little one deeply repentant for a serious oversight in the course of the day; admonished another; praised a third; and kissed and blessed them all, and went to look after her duties out of doors. When the clock struck eleven she had bound up the wound; mightily scolded at first, and then reconciled the married pair; comforted the little boy, and so on. When she returned she looked at the prices of weaving; arranged about the work and housekeeping for the morrow; eat in haste two potatoes with a little salt, and then went to the other end of the village to convey to an expectant, sick, and unhappy mother, the joyful tidings of a child now turned from the paths of vice.

I sate in the mean time in my room. Four little girls lay in beds around me, with rosy cheeks and snow-white sheets, sleeping quietly.

The calm beautiful August night, which was so warm that I could have my window open; the silence and repose around me; the light breathing of the slumbering children, had in them something delightful and pacifying, and awoke in me that still, pensive feeling which spreads calmness over the present, and often fans the remembrance of former years within us. The moon, that friend of the days of my childhood and youth, arose and looked kindly and pale over the birch-groves into my room. Its light stole caressingly over the closed eyelids of the children, then shone quietly upon a face which the days of life had withered—upon a breast whose feelings years have not yet been able to calm. O how wonderfully floated forth upon the friendly beams all those, so dear to me, mournful and joyous memories of my past life,—how clearly they ascended from the night, and crowded to my heart, so animated and warm! All the people with whom during my life I had come in contact, and who had become dear or important to me, seemed as if they would assemble around me, and revive their influence by word and glance. The H—— family, from whom I now had been separated for nearly a year, came at this moment so near to me that I seemed as if I could talk with its amiable members, ask them how all stood within their home,—whether they were

happy, whether they yet called me to mind?—Yes—whether? For I had received, for a long time, not the least token of remembrance, not a line, not a word. A childish anxious feeling of being forgotten—of rightly belonging to nobody—of being to persons whom we esteemed so highly and loved so much, so little—so nothing at all—overcame my heart for a moment. I could not help weeping—I sate with my handkerchief before my eyes, when Provostess Bult, who had seen me at the window from the court, came in. She questioned me seriously, like some one who will know a thing to the bottom, and I confessed my weakness with humility. She blamed me with warmth, admonished and kissed me with motherly tenderness, and bade me go to bed directly, and for her sake to take care of my health for a long time.

She left me; but I did not obey her just then,—struck a light, lighted my candle, and sate down to write a lecture—to myself. At that moment I heard the clock strike half-past twelve. All at once there was a noise in the house, and directly afterwards somebody sprang up stairs, and came to my room. My door opened softly, and the widow Lady Provostess Bobina Bult, in nightcap and slippers, with her bed-cover over her shoulders, stood there with joy-kindling eyes, and a thick letter in her hand, which she reached to me. “From H——s! from H——s!” she whispered. “I would not wait any longer for the city-messenger; but just as I was laying myself down

I heard him coming. I had a presentiment! Good-night! Good-night! God give thee joy!" And forth was Mrs. Bobina Bult.

I had joy. Julie's letter was as follows:—

August 13, 1830.

It is a clergyman's little wife who writes to you. It is two months since I was no longer Julie H——, but Julie L——. I had not courage to write before. I have been bewildered in my head, and properly anxious for some time. The causes:—first, the horrible respect I had for my dear husband,—yes,—I actually did not know for a time how I should conduct myself with my admiration of Professor L——, feelings of my inferiority and my precious self-love, which would not allow, under any condition, Julie H—— to go—how shall I say it—under its true price. And then—this blessed country house-keeping!—cows and sheep, and eggs and butter and milk, and so on, and a deluge of small things—and then mamma, who was so uneasy, and would help me; but—now,—by degrees every thing is come, for all that, into wonderful order. The little god with arrow and bow helped me. My good L—— is, I fancy, more solicitous to please me than I him,—yes, he was and is, God be thanked, rightly in love with me. After I saw this, there was no need—I took courage. Cows, calves, and hens thrive; under the great kettle of the house-keeping there was a brisk fire,—and mamma

was easy, thank God. And my husband—of course he was pleased,—because I was pleased with him.

Beata, do you know what I pray for, morning and evening,—yes, every hour,—with all the fervency of my heart?—"O God, make me worthy of my husband's love. Give me ability to make him happy!" And I have received much ability,—for he is (so he says and seems) very happy; if you knew how fresh he looks—how gay! It is because, do you see, I look after him; he does not look any longer so shabby as formerly; and then—he does not sit up at night; that he has left off. And nevertheless he thinks and writes (as he himself confesses) more freely and more powerfully than formerly. Besides this, I take good care not to disturb or trouble him when he is in his study, writing and reading. O!—when I wish very much to see him for a moment, (he is, after all, handsome, Beata!) I steal softly in, play him some little trick, lay a flower in his book, or kiss his forehead, or such like, and then go quite softly out, and receive, when I turn myself round to shut the door, always a beam of his eye, which follows me as it were secretly.

For the rest I endeavour to form myself into a right estimable clergyman's wife. I wish people to call L——'s wife a pattern for all the wives of his congregation. Don't imagine that with all this I forget, or neglect, my little outer man: O no! I take counsel very often in the glass, but do you know which glass

I most frequently consult? Ay, that which I see in L——'s eyes—it is so charming to see oneself *en beau*.

O Beata! how much more noble it is to be united to a person, whom one highly esteems and honours, and who is, at the same time, so good! As Arvid's wife, what a nonentity I should have remained, what a life of nothingness I should have led! Now I feel with inward joy that every day I ascend higher in my own esteem, and that of my husband. It is a happy feeling—to ascend.

Do you know that Arvid is married—has been so for three months. His wife, Eleonora D——, always looks very wide awake—and he looks—one may say—almost obliged to be cheerful. I fear that his good rest is a little disturbed. Poor Arvid! The young couple in the mean time give magnificent feasts and entertainments. The old gentleman P—— drives (certainly intentionally) almost every day past here with his “swans” and his daughter-in-law, in the handsome landau, and drives quite slowly, as if he fancied he was driving the funeral procession of my good luck;—but I feed my ducks with joy and with a heart free from care; nod kindly to Eleonora, and thank the Eternal Goodness for my lot.

It is Saturday evening. I expect my husband home. In the arbour outside my window I have set out our little supper table; asparagus from our garden, beautiful raspberries and milk,—L——'s favourite dishes—complete our supper. The angelic Hermina

Linnæa decorates at the moment the table with flowers. How lovely she is, how good she is, how indescribably amiable no one can imagine! She has almost supplanted us with our parents—and yet one forgives her so willingly. Ah! brother Carl! thou hast found a beautiful pearl. He will soon leave the shores of the Mediterranean, to find again in his beloved North his life's pearl, and to shut it up in the muscle-shell of marriage. Ha! how did I hit upon that narrow simile? Yet it must stand. Beams only the sun of love into the mother-of-pearl habitation it will float forth upon life's stream, a little island of bliss. Carl writes home such amusing and interesting letters. His soul is like a museum, among whose jewels Hermina will live. Thus, indeed, of a truth, like a pearl in gold. Do you know what happened to Carl before he left us? One fine evening he went to sleep—a Cornet, and woke—a Lieutenant! Was it not charming?

To-morrow, my beloved parents and sisters come here to dinner. It will be a happy day.

I have told you how happy I am, and yet I cherish now one wish and one right vividly, the fulfilment of which will complete the measure of my happiness. My good friend, there is in our house one little room, pretty and comfortably papered with green, and with white curtains (precisely such as you like), looking out on meadows where fat cows, which give the most beautiful milk, graze pleasantly; in the room is a

bookcase, a—yet it is so tiresome to describe!—come and see it, and if it please you, and you think you can be at home with your entertainers,—then—call it yours. My good friend, come to us—come. Now I hear L—— coming at a distance. He comes into my room. I shall pretend that I neither see nor hear him. One must not spoil these men, and make them fancy that one listens to their steps. Yes,—cough—embrace me—I shall not stir, nor drop my pen. One must not always submit; one must not spoil his ——

(L—— writes)

wife; and therefore Julie *must* give me the pen, and, sitting upon my knee, see me write that, for which she will inwardly be sorry.

Our good friend, Beata, come to us. We expect you with open arms. In our home you will find yourself well off. Come and see how I hold Julie in check. In order to give you a proof of this, she shall not, spite of her zeal, write one word more to-day.

I *will* wri—

14th of August.

I cry, I laugh, I am beside myself—and yet I must write. Do you know who is here?—who is just come? Guess, guess! Ah, I have not time to let you guess. Emilia is here, my sister Emilia! Emilia the good, Emilia the gay, Emilia the handsome—the happy Emilia! And Algernon is here, and the little Algernon—the most magnificent little boy on the earth! Mamma dances with him, papa

games with her. Emma dances, Algernon dances,
 I—— dances. Wait, wait, I will come and sing,
 and cannot write a word more, so sure as I am called
 JULIE.

I S.—*Heaven come back to us!*

Prays

THE H—— FAMILY."

AMANDA and happy family, I thank you; but
 Heaven will not come. I shall write this answer
 to-morrow. Innocent children, who slumber around
 me, I shall remain with you, because I can be useful
 to you. Happiness resigned often gives contented-
 ness of a higher kind—it gives peace. O might I only
 know that—while every day's quiet billows uniformly,
 but silently, bear me onward and towards that silent
 shore—and every day will be blessed.

Nightly mists rise up from the meadows announc-
 ing the morning, and admonish me to rest. Around
 the pillow of my life ascends also a cold mist. If it
 come nearer, I will write at once, and take leave of
 the H—— Family.

END OF VOL. I.

LONDON

Printed by Manning and Mason, Ivy Lane, St. Paul's.

THE
H— FAMILY:

TRÄLINNAN; AXEL AND ANNA;

AND OTHER TALES.

BY
FREDRIKA BREMER.

TRANSLATED
BY MARY HOWITT.

IN TWO VOLUMES.—VOL. II.

LONDON:
LONGMAN, BROWN, GREEN, AND LONGMANS,
PATERNOSTER-ROW.

1844.

LONDON
PRINTED BY HARRISON AND SONS,
19, LANE ST. FLEET ST.

PREFACE TO TRÄLINNAN

(THE BONDMAID).

A beloved friend, to whom I would communicate my warm interest in the Northern Legends of the Gods, read aloud with me during solitary autumn evenings in the country, a learned disquisition upon them. Her countenance continued stedfastly cloudy and dissatisfied during the whole, and when she came to the words—"Loke, found the half-roasted heart of a woman;" she flung the book vehemently from her and exclaimed,—“Nay! I can bear this no longer! It is too monstrous! too disgusting! It makes me actually ill!”

“And yet,” I zealously interposed—“I assure you there is much and deep meaning in this mythology, and the greatest interest, if we”——

"That may be," interrupted me my friend somewhat impatiently, "but to comprehend it, I promise you I must take another method. Do you write something about this meaning that you consider so deep, and then I shall see whether I shall comprehend or endure it."

The challenge was accepted with laughter; the execution of it drew forth tears,—for the misery and the darkness of the past arose, and was felt as present. Three days after our little conversation, the *BOND-MAIDEN* was written; and I proposed to read it aloud to my friend, while by way of prologue I said, "I have here endeavoured to collect into one tangible picture what our forefathers believed respecting gods and men, about life and death, heaven and hell, as well as earthly things. In the dawn of the world, as in that of the day, we see first the shadows of night still rest on the earth, yet at the same time we behold the morning red of the eternal truth, and herald of the sun, in whose light our race has acquired light, and the slave his freedom." My friend listened to my prologue in silence, and I commenced my reading.

It is always a hard matter to go through with, as my friend, whenever I begin to read to her any of my compositions, is sure to begin mercilessly to gape. I say "to go through with," because I have found that if the article rivet her attention, which, heaven

knows is not always the case, the gapings quickly disappear, and give place to most lively and enchanting sympathy. 'As now, therefore, with a secret glance at my friend, I began to read aloud "the Bondmaiden," and with a dreadful feeling saw her let one undisguised yawn follow another; I pretended not in the least to perceive it, but read on, and soon beheld to my great consolation, the mouth close itself, and the eyes and ears become profoundly attentive. The result of the reading was, nevertheless, but little edifying.

"Ah, my poor soul!" said my friend with a deep sigh, "that truly was no amusing history! For your Krumba, or Tumba, or Katakumba, is too hideous; and then the conclusion — ah! it is horribly tiresome altogether!"

I defended my Bondmaiden the best that I could, at the same time observing that her name was Kumba, and not either Tumba or Katakumba. My friend's last words were, "It may be very true that she is beautiful. I would willingly wish to believe so; but I beg to be excused liking her. There is interest enough about her; but the conclusion, the conclusion!"

The Bondmaid continued a good while after this in silence, undergoing, the while, first one and then

another change, but still without being able to win my friend's favour. I have now resolved to make the public, from whose decision, as from that of God himself, there is no appeal, the judge between us; and to hear what it says of the Bondmaid. My friend assures me, that no one can desire more cordially than she, that "Katakumba"—she has per-
versely taken a determined whim to call my Bondmaid thus—may be admired; and I protest to my friend, that no one can more heartily chime in with her desire than

THE AUTHORESS.

TRÄLINNAN:
A SKETCH FROM THE OLDEN TIME.

PERSONS.

FRID, King's Daughter, betrothed to King Dag.

KUMBA, } Bondmaids.
FEIMA, }

GRIMGERDA, a Sorceress.

A Spirit of Light.

A Spirit of Darkness.

The Scene is a woody mountain region. Amongst the rocks rises the Castle of a Viking. On one side is the Sea; on the other a Flower-Garden.

TRÄLINNAN.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

The Flower Garden. FEIMA binds up flowers to their supports. KUMBA waters them.

FRID.

THE morning is delicious and clear. Yet glitters in the grass the honey-dew from the tree Mima. The Nornor sprinkle its crown with water from the sacred fountain, and let it softly rain down in heavenly sweetness over the flowers and leaves of the field. The bee sucks it from the bosom of the flowers, and then bestows the precious juice on man, which is delicious both to the sick and the sound. How beautiful, how rich, is Nature, how full of wisdom are all her arrangements! How great is the goodness of God, who shaped the earth for mankind like a cup filled with honey!

Brightly advances the sun on his hero path. Receive my greeting, thou radiant creation of the All-Father, thou at whose fire spirits of light and spirits of darkness assemble themselves affectionately to prepare the golden harvest of the earth! Here all burns, here all rejoices in the splendour of the All-Father's eye! The All-Father is light, is fire. Love, too, is fire, is an animated flame sprung from the All-Father's bosom. O Sun! thou, the image of his person; thou, warm and glorious as love; I bow myself in adoration before thee, and pray thee to protect a flame as pure and powerful as thine. A beam of thy fire kindle thou in the eyes of King Dag; it burns yet more beautifully in his heart; he is the descendant of a divine race;—protect him, illumine his voyage over the great sea! Make his path light, his arm strong and victorious! Conduct him home to the court of his fathers, to his faithful bride; and, kneeling by his side, I will consecrate to thee a better offering than now, thou glorious king of day!

[She approaches Kumba and Feima.]

Bond-maidens, it is good! The flower-garden is well tended. The beauty of the plants gladdens both eye and heart. Soon, too, will King Dag see it, and reward your care. He has commissioned me to give you a testimony of his favour. He will one day give you more beautiful ones himself. Feima, take this silver chain. Thou shalt wear it on thy wedding-day. The same sun which blesses my union with

King Dag shall witness thy marriage with thy faithful Hreimer. He shall be my master-gardener. The cottage, which I have caused to be built for you, will soon be completed. I wish you always to remain with me and the king. Thou shalt brew the mead for our wedding; and thou wilt do well, Feima, to call the good Disor to thy aid, that it may be clear and strong.

FEIMA.

(Falls down and will kiss Frid's feet. Frid extends to her her hand.)

Princess! thy favour is great! We will live and die for thee! How beautiful is thy hand; how white, how silken. Only King Dag has hands as beautiful as thine!

FRID.

More beautiful, Feima, because they are stronger. Kumba, thou art the most intimate of my attendants. From the years of childhood have we been together. Thou shalt always be near me. Take this golden ring.

KUMBA.

King's daughter, that is not for me.

FRID.

I give it thee.

KUMBA.

My hand is brown; my fingers are short and bony—what shall the golden ring do there? It does not become me. Retain thy gift. Thy favour is all that I desire.

FRID.

O very well! I will keep my ring, but—till thy wedding-day. I know that Klur loves thee. Thou wilt not always be hard with him. He shall put the ring on thy finger. (*Kumba turns away.*) If thou hast a wish, thou shalt tell it me, that I may gratify it. I desire that all should be happy. Ah! see, see here reddens a rosebud! Welcome, thou little harbinger of the highest happiness! (*kisses it.*) Kumba! Feima! tend it well. Protect it from the night chill; moisten its root with the clearest water. “When the rosebuds redden, then shall I be near thee!” wrote last to me, King Dag. This rose is the first which reddens this year in the flower-garden. Perhaps when this flower opens, shall my life’s happiness be in bloom. Tend well the delicate bud, bond-maidens! Ye shall not do it in vain. Kumba, in about an hour I shall expect thee to attend me to the bath.

KUMBA.

I will be punctual.

FRID.

Once more—take care of my rosebud! . [*She goes.*

SCENE II.

KUMBA. FEIMA.

FEIMA.

How good she is!

KUMBA.

She is happy!

FEIMA.

How beautiful she is, and proud! Well is she worthy to be beloved by a king like King Dag. Kumba! What art thou doing? Thou breakest off the bud which she bade us cherish!

KUMBA.

She can have so many others.

FEIMA.

O Kumba! that was ill done. Ought not her slightest wish to have been a law to thee? She, thy lady, thy benefactress!

KUMBA.

I am her slave!

FEIMA.

And yet is she so gracious, so condescending to thee! Fie! Kumba!

KUMBA.

Reproach me not. My mind is embittered. I will die!

FEIMA.

Die! Wherefore?

KUMBA.

I am a slave!

FEIMA.

And has one of our race ever been treated better than thou? Has not the king's daughter exempted thee from laborious occupations? Hast thou not from childhood been allowed to be near her, and treated better than all the servants? Does she not give thee better clothes, better food? Dost thou not go freely about in the royal halls? Hast thou not there been instructed in much that thralls are not wont to know?

KUMBA.

Feima! Why dost thou call me fortunate? Call me unfortunate! Why was I not left in the humble cottage, with poverty and hardship, and taught by

custom to endure the stern lot to which I was born? Why did the bondmaid receive a dwelling in the halls of kings, and learn to compare? Why did I learn to love beauty and greatness, when my lot was ugliness and insignificance? Why did I receive instructions which taught me only to despair?

FEIMA.

Ah! it was thy proud heart which taught thee to feel thus! It is thy haughty spirit which converts the sweetness into poison!

KUMBA.

Frid too is proud, and yet in her that is no fault!

FEIMA.

No! for pride becomes her; but pride does not become us. She is of the race of the Jarls; we of that of the Thralls.

KUMBA.

And yet Feima, the Saga says, that the father of our race was a god—yes, the same god who afterwards became the father of the haughty race of the gods. We are the elder brethren and sisters. Why are we suffered to creep in the dust, when the younger brethren are exalted to God's heaven?

FRIMA.

I do not know. But this I know, that it would not befit thee to wear Frid's crown on thy head, her golden girdle around thy waist, and to walk so slowly and proudly as she does. I feel that I could not help laughing at that.

KUMBA.

Woe is me! I know it too. In me that were ridiculous, which in her is beautiful. I am called, and I am, Kumba.* But it is precisely of that that I complain. Why am I so?

FRIMA.

And I know too that there are much good and many joys for us if we can but bridle our minds and our desires. Have we not the sun's light and warmth? Have we not the fragrance of flowers as well as the king's daughter? Have we not the enjoyment of the cottage which protects us; of food which we eat? Can we not, under the guardianship of good masters, possess our husbands and children as well as the Jarls?

KUMBA.

Slaves!

* Chummy.

FEIMA.

Hreimer is a slave; yes, and his hand is sooty, but diligent and faithful is that hand; his heart is good, and his glance tells me how dear he holds me. By his side I shall live happy and free from care, for we love one another, and we love our masters, and know that they will not separate us, or sell our children away from us. We desire nothing better than always to live in their service.

KUMBA.

Happy thou!

FEIMA.

The same happiness may be thine if thou wilt; Klur loves thee.

KUMBA.

Fie, fie, fie then! I speak not of him.

FEIMA.

And if thou wilt not have a husband; if thou wilt remain single, what more pleasant lot canst thou have than to serve the noble Frid, and live in the royal halls, and see around thee men and women of the race of the Jarls? That, indeed, is great and beautiful.

KUMBA.

Miserable! Know, Feima, farther towards the

north, towards the region where giants and horrible dragons have their abode, there is found amid ice-clad mountains, a people not far removed from beasts. Their clothes are the skins of wild beasts; their dwellings, caves and clefts of the rocks; their speech a bestial noise. Well, then, amongst this people, in their woods, I should feel myself happier than here, in the halls of the king's daughter!

FEIMA.

Thou wouldst prefer living amongst detestable monsters of the woods rather than with the good and beautiful Frid? Thou wouldst rather freeze in their caves, and hunt in their woods, than plait her golden hair and bathe in a silver ewer her white feet?

KUMBA.

Yes, that would I.

FEIMA.

Wonderful! And why?

KUMBA.

Because there I should be free! Because amongst them I should be somewhat.

FEIMA.

I do not understand thee. But if thou findest thyself so unhappy here, wherefore, Kumba, dost

thou`not make thy prayer to Frid for thy freedom?
She loves thee, and could certainly not refuse thy
request. Wherefore dost thou linger where thou art
in torment?

KUMBA.

Ask me not!

FEIMA.

Thou art very strange. Thou wilt and thou wilt
not.

KUMBA.

Woe is me! It is so. My feet are riveted to the
spot which bears me.

FEIMA.

Sister! poor sister! I compassionate thee!

KUMBA.

Well mayest thou. But the powers who made the
races of the Jarls and the slaves, who gave to the one
gold and to the other dust—of these will I demand,
Was it just that ye dealt thus?

FEIMA.

Kumba, tempt not the gods!

KUMBA.

They who require of men worship because they

conferred on them a wretched life—who demand praise and offerings for the clod of earth which we cultivate with the sweat of our brow for others—to them will I say, “In your unjust, selfish existence—

FEIMA.

Silence! O silence! It is horrible to hear thee! Thy eyes flash, Kumba! Thou blasphemest!

KUMBA.

But if I do murmur and blaspheme in despair over my lot, what then? In a little time I shall grow dumb in the world—in a little time the blaspheming spirit will disappear like a vapour in space, and be as it had never been. But it has not disturbed the rejoicing songs of Valhalla; aloft there is not heard its pain and complaint. And when the achievements of the mighty shall live immortally in the songs of the Scalds on the earth—when their glory shall be admired by succeeding generations—who shall know anything of the life of slaves, of their virtues, their sufferings? Dumb, beneath the burden of their labours, they have sunk into the earth, and are forgotten. Where is found justice for them, in heaven or upon earth? We are born to no end.

FEIMA.

Nay, that I cannot believe. Say not our holy Sagas, that for us, too, shall be found room after

death, there, where every one shall receive his reward for what he has done on the earth, whether it be good or evil?

KUMBA.

Seest thou the pale grey cloud in the distance, which sails over the wild heath? Seest thou, far off in the marshes, the vapours tossed about by the wind? There beholdest thou the life of a slave after death. Seest thou the sun, how he warms the world from the inward glow of his own happiness; the stars by night, beaming down tranquilly, as kings from their thrones, as happy spirits in the courts of the gods—there hast thou the immortality of the noble-born of the hero-race. Dark is our life on the earth, dark on the other side of the grave! It is not good to go poor to Odin—the poor find in his halls no room. Alone for a nobly-born hero, alone for a king who carried far and wide the blood-dripping sword, resounds the road to Valhalla; for him only are adorned its couches, for him its cup is burnished, and the Valkyrior bring wine. The joys of heaven are made only for the great, the happy on earth.

FEIMA.

But it is said likewise, that the servant who comes in the train of a great lord can slip into the glorious Asgård; therefore, often do the servants kill themselves on their master's corpse.

KUMBA.

Fools! Yes, to become slaves to them after death as they have been here. "Wretches" are the slaves termed by the Scalds; and justly, for wretched is their lot even there, beyond Hela's nocturnal halls. Thraldom and fatigue await them there as here. And for such of us, who do not accompany some mighty lord in death, there shall be no resurrection—we have here lived in pain.

FEIMA.

Ah! my heart tells me different. It says that the gods will never take away again the existence which they have given.

KUMBA.

Seest thou the worm in the sand which is tortured and dragged along by ants? See how it writhes, how it is agonized! Let it be! If thou rescuest it, a thousand others will still be tortured. In vain dost thou writhe, worm. Thy tormentors drag thee to the hillock, to the unhonoured funeral-pile, from which no glorifying flame ascends, and where thou shalt speedily become nothing. Is not the worm created by the gods as well as we? They regard not the worm; they look not down on us. Our fates are alike.

FEIMA.

No, no! I would not believe that, if thou said it

a thousand times. They who have served in truth shall certainly hereafter dwell in peace and joy. But, were it indeed not so, were it otherwise——

KUMBA.

What then?

FEIMA.

From the dust was I taken. The goodness of God gave me life. I have seen the beauty of the sun; I have enjoyed the fruits of the earth, the freshness of the water, the cool shade of the trees—I have loved. If the gods shall one day reduce to nothing the dust which they have raised up, I will then praise them for the life which I have enjoyed; and will deliver again into their hands what from their hands I have received, if not without regret, at least without complaining.

KUMBA.

Shall I admire, or shall I despise thee?

FEIMA.

We are small; let us in humility acknowledge it. Humility is the soul's repose. O Kumba, Kumba! Leave thy proud heights—humble thyself. See, it is only by stooping that thou canst gather this beautiful flower. Quit the regal palace if thou art not happy there, but go not amongst the wild people. Come to us, sister; come and remain with us. Hreimer and I

will love thee, cherish thee, perform the heaviest tasks for thee. Choose a husband, possess a cottage, and press a child to thy bosom. My mother has told me, that when she gave me birth the world became light to her, and that she would not have exchanged me for a kingdom. The animals, which are so much beneath us, how they love, how they rejoice themselves in their young! Become a wife and mother, Kumba! become good and happy.

KUMBA.

The cradle and the bier are the tools of the Nornor, and no one can escape his fate. I will not give birth to a being doomed to unhappiness.

FEIMA.

Hreimer and I are happy, and yet we are the children of slaves.

KUMBA.

My mother was amongst the slaves of Queen Gunnild—she was the most faithful of her servants. Poor and heavy was her lot, yet did she wish to live. My father was a free-born person, who thought little of forsaking the woman who loved him, and the child she had born to him. I remember a night—that night has stretched itself over my whole life. Flames arose from a pile—they ascended high into heaven. It was the corpse of the queen which was burned.

My mother was amongst those who tended the pile; she, with many others, were cast alive into the flames! The queen, it was said, needed her attendants in the other world. I stood amongst the people, still a child, and heard my mother's cry, and saw her burn. Fatherless and motherless, I went thence into the world alone, and wandered in the woods without knowing whither. There came people, who seized me, and carried me back to the court of King Atle. They said that I wished to run away, and I was conducted to the presence of the king. I answered haughtily to his questions, and he caused me to be whipped till the blood came, in punishment, as he said, of my disobedience. Thou, Feima, then lay on thy mother's bosom—thou didst not understand what I felt.

FEIMA.

But Frid, King Atle's beautiful niece, understood it. She begged thee from the king, and cherished thee like a mother, although she was scarcely older than thyself. She endeavoured to recompense thee for all that thou hadst suffered.

KUMBA.

Then did I sit in the nights, and gazed on the wandering stars, on the flying clouds. I asked them of my mother's fate; I called her name, and listened. The night wind flew complaining over the heath, and

the fog bedewed me with tears. See, there, the only answer that I received.

FEIMA.

O canst thou not forget the horrors of thy childish years in all the kindness which has been showered on thy youth? And what dost thou know? Perhaps thy mother's soul lies happily in the sunshine which now closes thee in its warm embrace. O that it would become light in thy soul, and that thou couldst see life and thy own destiny in a clearer vision! It is long since thou hast offered to the gods. Come, sister, come! Let us go to the holy fountain of offering on the mountain. Dost thou see this silver-penny? I received it once from King Dag. I will now offer this for thee. Carry thou also thither an offering of something dear to thee, that we may win the favour of the Powers, and that they may hear our prayers.

KUMBA.

And what wouldst thou that I should solicit?

FEIMA.

A pious, a contented mind.

KUMBA.

Am I then so wicked, Feima?

FEIMA.

Sister, pardon me the hard word;—thou art not good.

KUMBA.

Thou speakest the truth. But, Feima, I have wished to be good. O! had the gods heard my sighs, Feima, I should now have been pious; like Frid, I would wish to make all happy. Seize, torment a bee, and it will sting, and leave poison in the sting; but leave it in its freedom, let it possess its wings and its flowers, and it will suck and confer only delicious sweetness.

FEIMA.

And what wouldst thou desire of the gods?

KUMBA.

Beauty, high birth, wealth, and—a king's love; room in the halls of Odin after death, for me and all my race.

FEIMA.

Kumba, thou art mad. Thy glance is wild. Poor sister! Thy mind is diseased. Come, O come with me to cool thy brow with the holy water, and offer and pray with me in the still morning, while the tumult of the world is hushed, and when Heimdal's ever-listening ears can be reached even by the lowest prayers. Come!

KUMBA.

I will not, sister. At the prayers which now arise

within me, thou wouldst be horrified, and the gods would reject me. Thou art right. My soul is sick. Therefore go, leave me alone. Go!

FEIMA.

And what shall I say to the king's daughter, when she inquires after her rosebud?

KUMBA.

Tell her that a bitter north wind took it off.

FEIMA.

Then thou wilt not accompany me?

KUMBA.

No, I say; no! Leave me alone.

FEIMA (*aside, as she goes away*).

I will then go alone, and pray for her. Yet—Hreimer, will gladly accompany me to offer with me for the unhappy sister. [*She goes.*

SCENE III.

KUMBA (*alone*).

Yes, go! Offer, pray to the mercenary, the unjust gods. I am not childish enough to do' that. But she

is good and pious. Were I but pious as she! Can I not be so? No! for I know more than she; my eyes have pierced deeper into the dark disposal of events; and a poison corrodes me, which she does not know. "Why dost thou not fly?" she demanded. "Wherefore dost thou not solicit thy freedom?" Unhappy power, which binds my will and my soul! Abhorred, beloved torment, which causes me to court what I never can win, and to seek what I ought to fly from, thou wilt tyrannize over me in life and in death. Ah! why saw I the glorious object that I am not to possess? Why should I behold a day which will never shine for me? Why, stern and terrible fate, didst thou allure me up into the light, only to plunge me deeper into my darkness? The mischief is now done; my eyes are dazzled, my glance is fascinated, my heart is doomed, my life is given over to misery. *Here* is my torment, and here must I remain; so will the inexorable Powers. I must, because I must hear his name pronounced. Not to hear him mentioned, is not to get air to breathe. I must see him again, once more hear his voice, and live in the lustre of his eyes. O King Dag! wilt thou notice the bondmaiden? Wilt thou give one look, one thought, to her who would gladly die for thee? Thou wilt clap thy proud steed with thy strong victorious hand; but it would be defiled by the touch of the hand of Kumba. For Frid—for the king's daughter—is thy hand; for her, thy em-

braces, thy kisses, thy great, proud hero-heart. And her do I tend and adorn every day, that she may become more beautiful for thee, and all the happier in thy love. Every day shall I see her beauty and happiness, and feel myself devoured by envy. O depth of anguish! O bottomless pit! In thee am I doomed to live and move for ever! [*She pauses.*]

In the cold, foggy Nifelhem is the fountain Hvergelmer. Streams of poison rush from it; and in its depth, amid countless snakes, lies the great snake Nidhogg, which gnaws at the root of the tree of the world—gnaws, gnaws till it decays. When I was very young, the Saga easily made me shudder. I am now quite at home in it. I seem sometimes indeed to be myself the fountain, that mist is my world, and that the worm gnaws at the tree of my life. [*Again silent.*]

Sometimes dark thoughts rise up within me. It is said that elves of darkness, which live on the northern edge of the earth, beneath the deepest roots of the Tree of the World, sometimes ascend thence, and speak words with the children of men, which fright the light of day. Hell sends them forth to execute its commissions and affairs. It seems to me as if at times the voice of evil spirits spoke within me, and exhorted me to

[*Another silence.*]

If I could but die, and find rest! Could my life, after death, but become pleasant; might once the

freed spirit but look down from heaven upon the earth, where it had suffered and been tormented Did I but know that a merciful God had prepared for his tired and weary child a peaceful and bright abode, where it might repose after its hard conflict, O then could I still submit myself! could then renounce, then [Weeps.

But, O ye gods! ye have forgotten us, and therefore is my spirit exasperated. To your favourites you have given all, to us nothing. Nothing? Yes, bitterness! poison! But with the poison there is strength. Ye Gods! if from the drops, which from hour to hour you cause to drop into my bosom, there swells a stream which burns and destroys, the guilt *fall*—on you!

SCENE IV.

Frid's Bedchamber.

FRID. KUMBA.

FRID.

Kumba! Plait my hair, and anoint it with the oil of the south, which I received from King Dag.

KUMBA.

What thou commandest I will do.

FRID.

And while thou plaitest it, relate to me some of the Sagas which thou knowest so well. It is justly said that the dwelling of the Sagas is surrounded by the murmurs of cool billows, to whose rushing Odin gladly listens. Enlivening and soothing at the same time are Sagas and song,—a worthy pastime for the race of the gods.

KUMBA.

Wilt thou, king's daughter, hear the ancient Sagas of Rig? *

FRID.

Gladly.

KUMBA.

Heimdal—so it is said; the trusty and wise god, went once on a time to walk in the country, and came on the sea-shore to a house which he entered. The door stood wide open; a fire burnt on the hearth, and within sate the inhabitants, grown grey with labour, Æ and Edda, in old-world garments. Edda took out of the ashes the heavy, thick, seed-mingled cake, brought forth the soup in a bowl; but the greatest delicacy was the sodden calf. Heimdal, who called

* Introduced into the older Edda. See Geijer's, "Svea Rikes Häfder."

himself king, continued three nights there, and nine months after his departure, Edda gave birth to a son, which was baptized and named Träl (Slave). He grew and flourished, was of a dark complexion, had wrinkled skin on his hands, contracted knuckles, thick fingers, an ugly countenance, a humpback, and long heels. A beggar-girl came to the house; her feet sore, her arms sunburnt, her nose hooked. She was called Trälinna (bondwoman, or female slave). She lived there with Träl, the heavy days, and bore him sons and daughters. Their employment was to twine boat ropes, to drag loads, to carry firewood, to keep and fatten cattle, herd swine, watch the goats, dig turf. From her came the race of slaves.

Rig went farther, and found in another house another pair. The door stood a-jar; fire burned on the hearth. The husband was shaping a tree into a weaver's beam; his beard was trimmed, his hair cut on the forehead; he had a close shirt, which was fastened by a clasp at the neck. The wife twirled the spinning-wheel, spun thread, and converted it into clothing. She had a fillet on her head, a brooch on her bosom, a cloth round her neck, and ribbon on the shoulders. The couple were called Afe and Amma. Rig was hospitably entertained, and stayed with them three nights. Nine months afterwards, Amma gave birth to a son, rosy and blooming, with sparkling eyes. He was baptized and called Karl. He grew and thrived, learned to tame oxen, to culti-

vate land, to build houses, forged horsenails, made carts, drove the plough. To him was conducted home as a bride, Snör, hung round with keys, in kirtle of goat's hair. They exchanged rings, spread the sheet, built a house. They had sons and daughters, and of them are come the race of *Karls*, or free men.

Rig went further. He came to a hall. The door was closed, and adorned with a ring. He entered. The floor was strown. There sate, the couple, looking each other in the eyes—*Fader* and *Moder*. Their work was play. The husband shaped bows, twisted strings, polished arrows. The wife ironed and starched her sleeves, and made up a head-dress. She had a jewel on her breast, a silken kirtle, blue figured linen, a countenance more beautiful, a bosom more charming, a neck more white than the recent snow. Moder spread the figured white cloth on the table, set on it the thin white wheaten cakes, and dishes of embossed silver, full of all kinds of meat, pork, and roasted birds. There was wine in flagons and embossed cups; they drank and talked till the day dawned. Rig remained three nights there also, and after nine months, Moder brought forth a son, who was wrapt in silk, was baptized, and called Jarl. His hair was flaxen, his cheeks bright, his eyes keen as those of a young eagle. He grew up, twisted bow-strings, shaped bows, flung the spear, shot arrows, shook lances, rode horses, hunted with hounds, drew the sword, and exercised himself in swimming. Then

came Rig again to the court, taught him Runes, gave him *his* name, and acknowledged him as *his son*. The young Rig therefore marched over the rocks in war, won victories and lands, distributed goods and estates, and married the daughter of Herve, the slender, fair, noble Ema. Of their sons, the youngest was Kour. He contended with his father Rig in the knowledge of Runes, and won. Then was it the son's lot to be himself called Rig, and thenceforth to understand Runes beyond all others. From him are descended the Jarls and kings.

Here ends the Saga about Rig.

FRID.

Thanks, Kumba! The Saga is beautiful and full of meaning.

KUMBA (*aside*).

Beautiful?! Yes, for her.

FRID.

But my attention was distracted while I listened to it. A great, a precious, and almost affecting recollection came vividly on my soul. To-day, three years ago, I saw, for the first time, King Dag.

KUMBA.

Ah! speak of that! (*aside*). The poison is sweet!

FRID.

Thou knowest that my father's brother, the gloomy Atle, had in an engagement killed King Dag's father, the victorious King Ifvar. King Dag, and his brother Ragnar, revenged their father's death, and stormed my uncle's castle. Shut up in the inner room of the castle with my tender brother Arild, I heard the din of arms, and the battle-cries of the warriors. Arild clenched his little hands in wrath. I prayed to the gods for his life, for I held him as dear as a mother. Suddenly I heard a cry, accompanied by a wild jubilation of victory. "Atle is fallen! The brave Ragnar has slain him!" But immediately thereon—"Ragnar is wounded! Ragnar is dead! Revenge! revenge!" Amid a horrid din, steps drew near the room. Before the strokes of war-axes, the door went to pieces. At this moment I felt not fear, but wrath and a proud desperation. I had seized spear and shield, and stood there resolved to die, rather than to surrender myself a prisoner; and till my last breath to defend the little one. "Back!" thundered a lordly voice to the on-pressing martial throng; and environed by the flashings of bloody swords, as by a thousand jagged lightnings, I beheld before me a man—a god he seemed to me to be.

KUMBA.

It was *he*!

FRID.

Yes, it was *he*! It was King Dag! "Yield thyself!" exclaimed he to me. In answer I sought his breast with my spear. My trembling hand was arrested by his sword, and he disarmed me. Bleeding, I sunk by my brother's side, exclaiming, "Mercy for him! Mercy for the child!" "Death to the traitor's son!" cried wildly the warriors, and rushed on. King Dag turned himself to his people, and covered us with his shield. "Back!" exclaimed he once more commandingly to the wild troop. "With women and children we contend not. The victory is won. Down with your weapons!" But a frantic lust of murder had taken possession of Ragnar's people, and they cried—"Blood for blood!" Then shouldst thou have seen King Dag! Glorious and strong as the god Thor, he lifted his broadsword in defence of the helpless. Like lightning flew its strokes whistling through the air, and fell on the blood-thirsty warriors. Heaps of dead were round his feet.

KUMBA.

The brave! the glorious!

FRID.

Seized with amaze at his superhuman strength, Ragnar's people began to give way. Then cried

King Dag—"Hither, my men! Every true friend follow me!" He lifted up Arild, and placed him in the arms of one of his warriors; he took myself in his own, and guarding me with shield and sword, he broke through the tumult of war. I saw nothing more. A swoon overpowered my senses; my eyes were closed.

KUMBA.

But he watched over thee?

FRID.

When I opened them again, it was night; but a night lighted up by a red and wild splendour. I saw from the distant strand a castle stand all in flames; but cool winds fanned my cheek, and farther and farther over the dancing waves, conveyed me the winged sea-dragon, and my little brother stood beside me under the purple pavilion, and clapped his hands in childish joy over the novel spectacle. Before me, on his knee, his godlike beautiful countenance illumined by the flames of the burning, and with uncovered head, lay King Dag, and I was his captive!

KUMBA (*aside*).

Happy lot!

FRID.

Ah, yes! His captive. For my heart had he

conquered,—the brave, the noble one; and I could not then, as I wished, in proud anger turn from the victor my glance. By his strength he had disarmed my hand, by his love he now sought to win my love; and when he prayed me as beautifully, as mildly as Balder, when he begged me, as a favour, to accept his kingdom and his crown, then I let him see what my heart felt, and he pressed me to his heart, and called me his bride.

KUMBA.

Thou happy one!

FRID.

Yes, I was happy. Days and nights went on, and life was to me like a beam of the light of God's heaven—all around me was so beautiful. The sea-dragon flew over the blue sea, under the dark-blue heaven, and the waves danced merrily around the prow, covered with golden shields, and the wind sung in the purple silken sails, splendidly embroidered with rich silver vine-branches. By day, King Dag exercised his men in martial manœuvres, and fired them to an almost frenzied, yet joyous, daring, while I watched them from the royal pavilion. When the evening came, and sea and winds were lulled, then took King Dag his harp, and played and sung by my side, which made my heart beat with transport. Then burned the stars clearer,

and the spirits of the sea arose in enchantment to the surface of the water; then seemed the sea to burn with a strange light, and we floated onward as on waves of fire. All things did homage to the glorious one, and he did homage to me; yes, happy was I, happy, amid the dangers of war! My father's castle was plundered and burnt. Enemies' hosts invaded King Dag's realm. We possessed no home. Then the son of Valhalla conducted me to the temple of Upsala, and gave me there an asylum, while he advanced against his enemies. He returned and brought me to this strong castle; but was himself again soon obliged to leave me, in consequence of a vow which forbade him to celebrate a joyous feast before he had freed his unfortunate sister Gudrun out of her ignominious captivity. Here should I remain, guarded by his trusty men, till he should return from the Saxon coast.

KUMBA.

And if he do not return? If he perish in strife on the distant strand? —

FRID.

No, no! I fear nothing. A far-prescient Vala, a renowned prophetess, who visited the temple of Upsala, has told me his fate. His course will be long and victorious. From this campaign he will return happily, and rich in honours and treasures.

KUMBA.

Thou hast seen the temple of Upsala, the magnificent court of the gods! Thou hast lived amongst Diar and Divor. Were they beautiful and happy?

FRID.

Yes, yes, beautiful and blessed. A noble tranquillity, an infinite dignity repose on their features, and breathe through their whole being. The cares and the joys of earth touch them not; they stand high above them, gazing into the clearness of the heaven of the gods. The countenance of the chief priest is majestic as we conceive of that of Odin, full of power and mildness. All disquiet dies in him who contemplates it: the before stormy heart hushes itself involuntarily at his glance, and is at peace.

KUMBA (*aside*).

Peace, ah! And I? (*aloud*.) And the temple and its happy abodes are really splendid?

FRID.

Beyond all description. Of gold and precious stones are the walls; a radiance glows thence, which illuminates the country far around. The gorgeous splendour of the interior of the temple testifies to the power of the divinity; while the silence in the sacred groves, in the lofty halls, interrupted only by

the solemn songs of the Diars, speaks of its sublimity, and draws the spirit to contemplation. Had I not so deeply loved King Dag, I should have dedicated myself to the service of the gods, and continued there amongst the sacred Assyniors.

KUMBA (*aside*).

She chooses between the throne and the temple.
But I? —

FRED.

When I recal those days, a wonderfully delightful and solemn feeling seizes me. Ah! it was beautiful in the courts of the temple, in its lofty halls! Pondering on the counsel of the gods, silently walked the deep-thinking Diars —

KUMBA.

And didst thou learn their secret wisdom—the verses which teach how to quiet waves, quench fire, and dissipate care? Didst thou get to know about the beginning and the end of all things?

FRED.

No! I was too young, and too much engrossed by the outward splendour of life, and by my love. My voice, indeed, blended with the songs of the Assyniors, and I took part in their nocturnal dances, in their ceremonies; but their meaning I understood

not. They regarded me—and justly—as not worthy to comprehend them.

KUMBA.

And what, indeed, is all the wisdom of the priests, in comparison with the love of such a king as King Dag?

FRID.

Thou sayst truly, Kumba. But had I never seen him, then could I have preferred, beyond any earthly throne, to live as a priestess in the holy temple. Asgård, as it is also called, is an image of the celestial Asgård, the eternally green Gudhem; and beautiful is it, amid offerings and songs of praise, to walk before the gods on earth, and up to their everlasting abodes above us.

KUMBA.

That I can believe. Are there always offerings in the temple?

FRID.

Yes, often; but there are in particular three great annual festivals, which were instituted by Odin. Recently has been celebrated the Sacrifice of Victory, that takes place in spring, when the open waters invite to Viking-voyages.

KUMBA.

And do they indeed sacrifice men?

FRID.

Yes. Most commonly slaves and malefactors.

KUMBA.

Slaves and malefactors?

FRID.

Yes; but sometimes also the noblest life. The victim is led forth festively adorned; the seats of the gods are tinged with blood; it is also sprinkled on the assembled people. The smoke which ascends from the flame of sacrifice is delicious, and fills the halls with a delicious aroma. Sweetly sound in accordance the songs of the priests.

KUMBA.

But the victims, the victims! do they complain not? do not their shrieks of misery ascend above the songs of the priests?

FRID.

Their wailings are prevented; or are drowned in the songs of praise.

KUMBA.

They are drowned by the songs of praise?

FRID.

Yes, and no dissonance disturbs the majesty and beauty of the lofty solemnity.—But what is this, Kumba? I hear the tramp of steeds, the pealing of horns; the drawbridge is raised! There must be tidings—important ones! Good Kumba, go, fly, and bring me word what it is.

[*Kumba goes.*]

SCENE V.

FRID (*alone*).

It is certainly a messenger from King Dag! My heart assures me of it;—how it beats! Still, thou unquiet one, still! O the pleasures and the pangs of love! And yet, beloved pangs, I would not exchange you for the Assynior's eternal repose! O my king! to love thee, that is my life; but if my heart beats thus at the anticipation of a message from thee, how shall I be able to see thy face and not die of joy?

SCENE VI.

FRID. KUMBA.

KUMBA.

A letter—from—King Dag! With it there are costly presents——

FRID.

A letter! Give it me, give it me! O ye dear Runes! (*kisses the Runic tablet and reads*). He comes, comes soon! Before the next new moon he is here! Victorious, rich in honour and spoil, comes he to his bride, "the eternally beloved." O my bridegroom! O my Dag!

KUMBA (*aside*).

And I?

FRID.

I will myself make the arrangements for the messenger's reception. I will myself speak with him. I must see the man who has lately seen my beloved; I must hear him talk of King Dag. Kumba, go thou and work on the golden girdle, and be diligent, Kumba, that it may be quickly ready. I will wear it on the King's arrival. I desire that he should find his bride beautiful. I shall then really see him soon! Happy I!

[Goes.]

SCENE VII.

KUMBA (*alone*).

But I! Why was I born? Shall I now see them, their embraces, hear their sighs of love and vows of truth? Shall I adorn her for him; help to make her still more beautiful in his eyes? So has she commanded. O ye great! ye dream not that a slave also has a human heart. You trample it under your feet, and give it not a thought, and take not the slightest heed of its death-pangs. "They drown their complaints," said she, "that the joy of the high solemnity may not be disturbed." They dragged them forth to the stone of sacrifice; they murdered them, and drowned their complaints. Out of the fire which devoured their quivering limbs, there arose a sweet odour for the chief priest who sung the praises of the gods. But the men! the slaves! the poor! no help, no escape. They must submit. They were dragged forth spite of prayers and resistance. They must submit. Horrible doom of the Norna! Hard necessity! And for me to—but why necessity for me? If I will, who can constrain me? Can I not, if I will it, command both my own fate and that of others? Necessity exists only for the weak. The strong makes his own laws, and compels even the gods. My stature indeed is low, but my will is strong. Let the sacrificers tremble.

If I should kill Frid, and clothe myself in her garments, and deceive King Dag in the obscurity of night? Loke was cunning, and Loke was successful. I feel that his fire burns in my veins. (*She puts on Frid's mantle, and puts her crown on her head.*) In truth a glorious costume. Well may the heart beat proudly beneath this splendour. Now am I the king's daughter. (*She gazes at herself in a burnished steel shield.*) Woe is me! I am it not. My figure is short and thick, my eyes small, my hand rough. Woe! I am the bondwoman's daughter, and my lot is fixed, woe! (*Flings down the robe and crown, and stamps violently.*) No, I will not; I will not long endure this torture. The snake rages in my vitals, and I long after something which may still its hunger. It must be done—by some means! Shall I go to the temple, and gaze into the divinely-tranquil countenance of the chief priest, which allays all disquiet? No; I see the sacrificial knife in his hand!—the victim bleeds,—the sacrificers cry—it is the tranquillity of the gods!

CHORUS OF SPIRITS OF LIGHT UP IN THE AIR.

Look to heaven,
To the sun look,
They deceive men never;
Shrieks of victims
Shall have ending,
God's sure goodness never!

Offer hatred,
Offer vengeance,

Meed of vengeful will,—
 'Tis but torture ;
 But the true heart's
 Lot is lovely still.

Wonder not then
 At the lofty
 Peace of powers sublime.
 See how brighten
 Earth's own fortunes
 In the far-off time!

From the depths, and
 From the heights, will
 There be heard a voice,
 That to captive
 And to mourner
 Shall proclaim—"rejoice!"

Dumb shall grow each
 Elfin chorus ;
 But in heaven's acclaim
 Loftier spirits
 Shall adore the
 World-Redeemer's name.

KUMBA.

(Wakes out of deep thought, and says slowly.)

But, perhaps, after the conflict—after the sacrifice, after the last bitterness, the last eclipse—it will become light—it will be calm, for the victim ! If one surrenders oneself freely, bleeds quietly, prays, and dies !—I hear happy voices speak of peace and reconciliation,—but, perhaps, they are only seductive illusions. I have had such before !—

CHORUS OF SPIRITS OF DARKNESS UNDER THE
EARTH.

Sweet is revenge, for
It strengthens and quiets
Feelings of storm in
The suffering heart.
Drink of its fountain,
Heart, thirst-consumed,
Deep be thy draught,
And thy thirst is no more.

Slavish souls waver—
They will and they will not ;
Dare, then shrink trembling,
And perish in pain !
Spirits heroic
Dare, and accomplish,
Quenching their pangs
In the conqueror's blood.

KUMBA (*as before*).

Yes. Yes, they were illusions—and I was merely weak. I hear well-known voices ascend out of the depth, and reproach me with it. Despicable is the eternally-complaining, eternally-hesitating soul. Despicable I will not be. I know what I will do. Yonder, far amongst the rocks, on the desolate shore, which the traveller dreads and the mariner shuns, dwelleth a sorceress, noted for her various knowledge, and exercising the mighty magic art—*Seid*. To her I will go—will bestow on her the most precious thing which I possess, on condition that she exerts her magic art for me, and gives my heart rest.

Ha! this thought invigorates my soul. It is said that snakes and wolves are her companions. Them I fear not. I have known them as they raged here within me. Away! away! To her! to her!

SCENE VIII.

FRID (*alone, standing in a window of the Castle*).

FRID.

What a storm! The night is wild, and in vain have I sought rest upon my bed. The sea-gull's cries sound shrill amid the roar of the waves. Ran's daughters, the dolorous, the poison-mixing, who, with pale hair, wander from rock to rock, seeking warm human hearts that they may press to their cold bosoms, how they now rave and foam, tumbling over each other—the terrible ones! Wildly dash pale lightnings from the careering clouds. O ye friendly powers, who desire the good of men, protect my beloved one on his voyage. Conduct him victoriously through the storms and the waves! He is a true descendant of the race of the gods, and so is his bride. Protect, bless us both! [*She is silent.*]

Is it the gloom of night which thus operates on my mind, or—is it an unhappy foreboding? But there is a strange feeling in my bosom, and gloomy thoughts

arise there, like the black elves out of the earth. Frid was not formerly weak and easily terrified; she has not trembled at the thunders of war; and when the winter-night came black and threatening, then I thought on King Dag and remained cheerful. Why then now? Now that he is no longer far off, now that he approaches every moment nearer to me, when I shall speedily look into his clear eyes—wherefore now this unquiet, this secret quaking in my heart?

[*Pauses.*

The sky is dark and wild. On the desolate coast gleam meteor lights. I know that they are base creatures, and seek to injure mankind. But ought, indeed, flames, gleaming spirits of witchcraft, to work evil to a descendant of Balder? Ought King Dag's bride to fear them? She will not.

[*Another silence.*

What strange power is it which moves itself in the air—so strong, so mighty to disturb? And this light, so mild, almost faint, like a feeble petitioner—whom does it guide through the dark night? Why is this light so different to that of the sun in splendour, and in its effect on the heart? How it battles with the dark clouds! Now it is quenched. Strange world, strange dark deep!—

I have been very happy. I have gone through life as in the radiance of a strong sunshine. If at any time the night threatened me, there came only a brighter day. But if the night should now come in earnest, and change my life into darkness!—

I have not reflected much on life. The very happy merely enjoy, and do not think. I have enjoyed life, and praised the goodness of the gods. But many are not so happy as I am. Many have little or no gladness. How do the world and the gods appear to them?—

Thoughts arise in me which I never had before. The lot of life seems to me strangely dealt on the earth. Why do some men receive so much and others so little? The goddesses of fate sprinkle the branches of the tree of the world with life-giving streams; but the drops fall unequally. O! but the fresh, the richly-sprinkled branches, will bend themselves over the dry ones, and impart to them of their moisture. This is certainly the will of the benevolent gods, and Frid's highest happiness shall be to follow it. And if some time my hour should come, my hour to suffer—what is that? Ye gods! what a hideous shape rides there on the pale moonbeams! He is little and black as a son of Hel. Is it one of the spirits which was born to Loke by the witch Angurboda; or is it a creation of my sick imagination? No, it draws nearer! It is no illusion!—Speak, hideous one! Who art thou? What is thy will?

BLACK-ELF.

From the under-earth I come on a message to thee.

FRID.

To what end? Wherefore?

BLACK-ELF.

Misfortune awaits thee. Death threatens thee.

FRID.

Death! Ah, no! I will not die, no!

BLACK-ELF.

Death is near thee.

FRID.

Nay, nay! Ah! What dost thou at my heart? It is become so heavy. Away, black one, away! Thou mayst not injure me! I am of the race of the gods.

BLACK-ELF.

Hel waits for thee in his dark dwelling.

[He vanishes.]

FRID.

I will not! No, I will not! Away! Ha! What a frost there is in my veins! Kumba! Kumba!

SCENE IX.

KUMBA. FRID.

KUMBA.

Princess?

FRID.

Kumba! I am ill! Nay, turn not so pale, Kumba. It will go over. Is he gone, the hideous one? Seest thou nothing, Kumba?—there, in the moon-shine?

KUMBA.

I see nothing—except the shadow of thy own head on the wall. Look thyself.

FRID.

I have, indeed, had a bad dream. It was a miserable dream—a very miserable dream. It agitated me deeply. It was a weakness. Give me something to drink.

KUMBA.

Take this draught. It will strengthen you.

FRID.

Thanks—I need it. How thy hand trembles, good Kumba. The drink was good. Thanks, Kumba!

KUMBA (*after a moment's silence*).

Dost thou feel thyself better?

FRID.

Yes—I am better. I am calmer now. Go again to thy bed, Kumba. I, too, will go to rest, and endeavour to forget this dream. Good-night.

KUMBA.

*Good-night!**[She withdraws.]*

FRID.

I will try to sleep. I will no longer think on this hideous apparition. It was, perhaps, only a deception, a night shadow, which will vanish in the light of day. I will sleep,—I will sleep.

ACT II.

SCENE I.

The Flower Garden. The evening.

KUMBA. FEIMA.

KUMBA.

Thou weepest, Feima.—Wherefore ?

FEIMA.

Canst thou ask ? Is not the daughter of kings sick, sick to death ? Do not her steps every day become fainter, her cheeks paler ? See we not the traces of bitter tears on that countenance which before beamed only with smiles ? Is not her very voice weak and faltering ?

KUMBA.

And therefore dost thou weep ?

FEIMA.

Yes; I weep, I will weep, that the lovely, the divinely-good Frid shall go away from the earth; that Hreimer and I shall lose our beloved mistress; that the young king will come home, and find his beautiful bride grown pale. How desolate will the rose-garden be, when we no longer see there the daughter of kings, no longer hear her silver voice; no longer see her beautiful countenance, she, the queen of all flowers! O it was a feast for me even to look upon her!

KUMBA.

Thou callest her the divinely-good. Why didst thou do that?

FEIMA.

Is she not so? Does she not desire to make every creature happy?

KUMBA.

Out of her rich treasure, she takes some gold dust and throws it around her. Who could not do that? What endures, what suffers she for the help of her fellow-creatures? Does she, indeed, touch with a finger the burden under which thou art bowed down? Does she stoop in order to alleviate thy fatigue?

FEIMA.

Kumba, thou art strange! Can, indeed, one of the race of the gods do thus?

KUMBA.

Why not, if it be good? Is not goodness, is not mercy divine?

FEIMA.

Yes; but the high gods, and their descendants, cannot perform the labours of slaves. It is not befitting them. Every one has his proper part.

KUMBA.

See then — it is therefore that I cannot do homage to thy gods, because they deem themselves too good to do good to us. *My* God, he before whom I would bow my knee, must do otherwise.

FEIMA.

And how?

KUMBA.

He should cause himself to be born in a lowly hut; he should participate in our burdens and our sufferings; he should choose his friends from amongst the despised and poor. He should, like the slaves, be scorned by the high, and partaking in their whole

fortune, should, although innocent, be put to death as a malefactor. But after death, he should come again in his glory to his own, and say to them,—“ I have suffered this with you and for you, that you might not despair, but believe that the Father of all looks down upon you; for on the other side of Hel’s dwellings, he has prepared a place for you, where you shall rest from your labours, where your tears shall be wiped away, and where you shall live in glory with me to the end of the world!” Oh, many other words should he say, at which the earth should tremble — power should be thrown down — chains should burst, and the fate of the slaves be changed the earth be bathed in blood! Ha! glorious, glorious!

FEIMA.

What spirit speaks through thee? Foam stands around thy pale lips. And thy words! How wild and strange they sound! Kumba! listen! Thou terrifiest me; but I understand thee not.

KUMBA.

That I believe.

FEIMA.

But this I understand, that she is good who gave me this chain, who built for Hreimer and me a cottage; who every day made my heart glad with

her friendly words. I know that I would rather bear burdens twice as heavy than see her oppressed by the least thing. When she commands, and I obey her, I know that it ought so to be, and that it is best for us both that it should be so.

KUMBA.

Thou art a slave, body and soul. Remain in thy dust!

FEIMA.

I will so, Kumba, and it shall not hinder me from being contented, and from believing in the goodness of the gods to great and small. To the gods will I now pray for the daughter of kings, that she may be restored to life, to her young consort and us. Blessed be he who heals her; blessed be he who averts from her Hel's cold hand! But cursed be he who desires her suffering! And if it be a human hand, may it be thus cursed! May Nifelhem's cold poison-stream drop for ever on the traitor's heart; may he never enjoy gladness on the earth!

KUMBA.

Sister, speak not thus!

FEIMA.

Yes, thus will I speak! I will work evil to the

evil one who desires the death of the good one! But I will not yet despair. I will sacrifice and pray for her. Seest thou this beautiful chain? I received it from her; for her will I offer it for the reconciliation of the unfriendly powers! [Goes.

SCENE II.

KUMBA (*alone*).

Blessings, curses, all are alike to me now, and stir my heart scarcely more than a faint evening breeze stirs the leaf of the aspen. Thus has it been within me since I ate of the she-wolf's heart, at the old woman's in Jernskog. It made my heart hard and cold. The swelling, its scathing torture, ceased. Hunger for revenge grew strong for action. I took courage to give to the proud daughter of kings the poison-draught which the sorceress had prepared. Since then there lies a trance upon my soul—it seems to me to sleep heavily, heavily;—will it not awake?

[*A pause.*

Frid is dying. Now is her joyous career closed. Now she partakes the mortal fate of others, and can learn what suffering is. Now will she not embrace, and be embraced by King Dag. All this beauty, this pride, this splendour will wither, moulder into dust!

No more will she pass like a reproach over my life, my feelings. I shall get rest!

Rest! Thou didst promise it me, mighty, dark Grimgerda; but yet lives a gloomy disquiet in the depth of my soul. I thirst after her tears. Methinks they would cool my tongue. A hunger devours me to see her sufferings, to hear her lamentations. That must proceed from the she-wolf's heart. Before, I was not so hard. And yet—if it could but be undone—if I could in the fountain of Urda purify myself from this guilt and yet go away and die innocent!

But it is too late. Therefore away, foolish thoughts! It is too late; I cannot return; and therefore forward, forward into the night, till all becomes dark; forward into hardness, till all becomes rigid and dead. Powers of Afgrund, strengthen my heart! I cannot win reconciliation with heaven. Well then, Afgrund! give to me then the benefit of my crime. Frid approaches. I will fix my attention on her feeble gait, on her pale countenance, her dimmed glance. Ha! now be proud, daughter of kings! Boast now of love and honour! I will hide myself behind the hedge of roses, and listen to her bewailings. Sweeter will they be to me than the song of the nightingale in the evening.

SCENE III.

FRID (*her appearance betrays a great debility,
a wasting suffering*).

FRID.

This is the hour when all things weep the death of Balder. There is no tree, no leaf, no flower, which is not bathed in silent tears; the very stones are bedewed with sadness. Now is Nature weak; her soul is moved; now can she perhaps feel sympathy with the sufferings of a daughter of humanity; and will hear her prayer, and put an end to her torment.

[*She supports herself thoughtfully against a tree.*]

He died, the good—wounded by the hand of a subtle foe, and in the same instant Peace quenched her torch and Discord kindled her crackling flames. Pain and tears made their home on the earth. Before, it was not thus; before, it was very different. The gods played joyously on the green earth, and in love created the race of men. But Jettermör came and excited woe; and monsters arose, and strife

I did not notice this before, but now I see it, for the agony which consumes my body opens my eyes to the world's suffering. What is good, what is pure in life? Does not the serpent of Midgård coil his venomous circle round the earth? Does not Nidhogg gnaw at the root of the Tree of the World? Is there

not found a concealed worm in every human heart, in the bosom of every flower? It slumbers for a while, and the flower diffuses its fragrance, and the man smiles. But it wakes, comes forth, and stings, and the flower withers, and the man dies.

My hour, too, is come; my hour of suffering. Since the night when the Black elf came with its message of terror, a secret disease corrodes my heart, and my days and my nights are without repose. My eyes are weak, my lips parched, my knees tremble—my strength of life dies away! . . .

O Dag! O my bridegroom! What wilt thou say when thou comest to thy castle, and findest thy bride changed into a pale ghost? Yes, perhaps before . . . but no! that were too cruel! To *die* without having seen thee were eternal misery. No! so savage the Nornor are not! O no! Stands not the All-Father's heaven above me so clear and mild? Stand not the beings of nature all around me so tearful and tender? Why, then, should I despair? Why should I not yet hope to regain life and happiness? Perhaps this suffering was merely sent to make me better, and more grateful. I will bow myself before the gods of nature, and implore them for help, for great is my suffering, great my need of alleviation.

O ye friendly powers which murmur in the green trees! Strong and healing are the juices which the sun pours into your bosoms. Proud and strong do ye stand against storm and winter, but on the head

of the weary wanderer you stretch your protecting arms, and give a covert to the young of the bird. Hear, ye gentle existences, my lamentation and my prayer. Torture consumes my limbs, and will sink by degrees my body to the grave! Tell me, O tell me! have you strength which can give life to my strength; manna, which can invigorate mine?

THE SPIRITS OF THE TREE.

We have it not!

FRID.

Ye spirits which sport in the bosom of the flowers, which glance up so beautifully and joyously at the light, ye whom I trusted, and loved, and kissed; say ye lovely, gracious beings, can ye alleviate, can ye help me?

SPIRITS OF THE FLOWERS (*softly and sadly*).

We can not.

FRID.

Ye pale dwarfs, which dwell in cliffs and stones! I turn to you now, and implore, implore with tears, for great is my suffering! You, too, weep the death of Balder. O! certainly, goodness like gold dwells within your bosoms. Deny me not. Give healing; give help!

THE DWARFS (*roughly.*)

No!

FRID.

Everywhere refusal! that is hard. Nature abandons me. Mighty All-Father! wilt thou also do so? To thy heaven I venture to lift my hands, and pray for that life which I received as a gift from thee. Burns not thy evening-heaven so gloriously in the light of thy countenance? Dost thou not look down upon the earth with love, and on the beings whom thou hast created? All-Father! listen to my prayer! Let me live! Let me, at least, once more witness the return of my bridegroom; let me yet once see, and embrace my Dag! And if thou grantest my request—send me a sign. Let a star fall, let a sough pass through the grove! [Pauses.

All is hushed! It is silent as the grave. The red flames of evening expire, and the welkin grows dark. Denied even here! Denied or unheard. It is then certain! I must die!

[Retires in silence.

KUMBA (*comes forth.*)

Beautiful! glorious! She sighed; she prayed like me, and was unheard like me. Now are we alike, daughter of kings. Pleasure sits like a cramp in my heart. For this moment of enjoyment have thanks, mighty Grimgerda!

SCENE IV.

A Room in the Castle. FRID lies on a couch.

It is deep twilight.

FRID.

Long, long hours, how heavily ye stride on; and nothing affords one moment of rest or forgetfulness. The worm gnaws, and eats even deeper into the tree of my life. *Hresvelger*, devourer of corpses!—thou who sittest at the northern end of heaven, and waftest with thy wings—I hear thy cold wind murmur around me. O I am sick, sick even to the soul! Darkness has obtained power over me! My Dag is absent!

I shall die. I shall quit the friendly earth. I shall relinquish my chosen consort, never more to be enlightened by his glance, never more led by his hand. How will it be with me? They tell of heavenly dwellings, where the noble and the just find entrance when they issue from Hel's dark realm. What are they? Are they indeed for me, and how will it be with me in them? Shall I never see again my beloved king? Shall I love him still, when death chills my heart? Ah, what is my life without my love! How uncertain, how desolate, pale and wild is all in the realm of shadows!

I shall die! I feel how my life dwindles away. Shall it sink into eternal night? But if all here in

life—love, virtue, suffering, patience, should be in vain——O bitter, bitter thought!

Good All-Father, no! That cannot be. I will hope, I will trust in thee. Thou didst create the sun and love—thou must be as good as thou art powerful. I will put my head beneath thy hand, and will praise thee even in the embrace of torture. When my tears fall, they shall not accuse thee. Forgive my weakness, my complaints! They will soon be over. I have loved thee, and trusted in thee. I will love thee and trust in thee still, and in my love will find strength to bear my fate. *[A pause.]*

How peaceful is it become within my bosom! I breathe more easily. Methinks that a breath of life is breathed upon my forehead. It grows light.

[A radiant Light-Elf appears at the foot of FRID's bed.]

What an apparition! My eyes are dazzled!

[She covers her eyes with her hands. After a moment she again looks up.]

Is it still there? Beautiful, radiant being! whose splendour is like that of the sun, whose countenance is mild as that of a vernal sky. Who art thou? And whence?

LIGHT-ELF.

My home is the pale azure space. I am of the race of elves, a guardian genius for mankind.

FRID.

O thou comest to me as a messenger of life and

gladness! Thou bringest me certainly some of the apples of Iduna, which have power to renew the youth even of the gods. Thou comest to restore to me health and happiness—my heart tells me so. Or why else shouldst thou come so kindly and radiantly? The gods have sent thee to me to put an end to this bitter trial, to give me again my Dag! Why is thy mild glance so powerful? Why dost thou quench thy clear beams? Ah, shine, shine, gracious being! Kindle with thy light the beams of life again in my bosom.

LIGHT-ELF (*sorrowfully*).

Daughter of man! I cannot!

FRID.

Cannot? Art thou not sent hither by gracious powers to raise and gladden?

LIGHT-ELF.

I came to console thee—to make thy death less bitter.

FRID.

Must I then die?

LIGHT-ELF.

The Nornor have determined it. ,

FRID.

The goddesses of Fate? The inexorable, the fearful! What have I done to them? Why do they desire my death?

LIGHT-ELF.

Daughter of man, I do not know. The children of Alfhem are permitted to know the will of the Mighty One, but not to penetrate its causes.

FRID.

Then why comest thou to me? Why shouldst thou, by awaking fresh hopes, awaken fresh pangs? Leave me! I can die without thee. Leave me! Thy light gives me pain.

[The LIGHT-ELF retires, and waits at the bottom of the room like a faint glimmer.]

FRID.

Is he gone? I was impatient, hasty! How weak I am! And he came to give me consolation — But what? Do I not see yonder, although feeble, his friendly gleam? O come again, thou lovely, gracious being! Pardon the weakness of the dying. Come back! and if thou hast comfort to give me, speak to me, and strengthen my soul —

[The LIGHT-ELF returns, but surrounds himself only with a feeble glow. FRID proceeds.]

Thou art very good, and it does my heart good.

I feel that to thee I can open my innermost heart. See, friendly being, I have suffered much in a short time; and my own anguish has made my eyes quick to perceive the sufferings of mortals. It has seemed to me that nothing was good on earth; and there have been moments in which I have doubted of the goodness of the gods—of all that makes life valuable; for all under the sun was uncertain and changeable—all flowers blooming only to wither—all creatures born only to die.

LIGHT-ELF.

Does not the heaven vault itself eternally over the changeable earth, embracing it from morning till evening? So does the All-Father surround the world, and bear it in his faithful embrace. The sun continues for ever the same; and in the sun thou beholdest an image of the All-Father's ever-watching eye!

FRID.

Yet war exists on earth; and the old legends prognosticate a fearful strife, in which the earth, and men, and gods shall perish.

LIGHT-ELF.

They will rise again, glorified. *One God*, mighty, just, and good, will then reign in all. Balder will again live upon the earth, and all evil will disappear from it. O daughter of man! the path of life is strife;

but the goal is peace, and the means, reconciliation. A day shall come when heaven and earth become one, and gods and men, as of old, shall on the green Idavall play happily together.

FRID.

But when the powers contend, when worlds perish and are born again, O say! when shall the souls who are already gone hence find their home?

LIGHT-ELF.

Many good houses has the All-Father for the just on earth. But the most beautiful is the lofty Gimle; a house more fair than the sun, and roofed with gold. There shall faithful and word-keeping men dwell.

FRID.

Is there a home there for me? Shall my dwelling be Gimle the lofty?

LIGHT-ELF.

Daughter of man! I cannot tell thee that; for many are the races of man, and many are the houses. Perhaps Frigga will take thee up into her glorious Vingolf, amongst the blessed troops of the Assyniors. Perhaps wilt thou become one of the chosen virgins who dwell with Gefion in his heavenly palace. Thy dwelling I cannot declare; but one thing I can promise thee, in the name of the mighty gods—life after death!

FRID.

And tell me, O tell me!—for, of all things, that is to me the most important—shall I, beyond death, see again my beloved king, my bridegroom?

LIGHT-ELF.

Is thy soul strong in its love to him?

FRID.

Without him life has no value for me; but to purchase immortality for him, I will myself become nothing.

LIGHT-ELF.

O then rejoice, daughter of man! For if thy love is stronger than death, then death can never again have power to separate you.

FRID.

Almighty and good gods! What sayest thou?

LIGHT-ELF.

After death thou shalt become his Fylgia, and guide him through all life's dispensations. In his dreams thou canst approach him, and whisper in his ears thy eternal truth; thou canst warn him of the dangers which menace him, of the foe who seeks his life. When he reposes from his fatigues in war, thou

canst draw near to him in the shape of a bird, and enchant his soul with song. Changed into the loveliest rose, thou canst breathe fragrance for him, and in fragrance impart thy love. When a treacherous enemy lies in wait for him, thirsting for his blood, thou canst take his form, and the traitor shall cast his spear at thee, and pierce—only the air! But thou weepst?!

FRID.

For joy! How delightful are thy words, beautiful child of the azure welkin. Why do they not let death become bright? I shall no longer fear the time which separates me from earthly life, since, O my Dag! I shall then better be able to accompany and serve thee than I am in this mortal shape. But tell me more, O spirit of light! tell under what circumstances his death-hour also shall arrive!

LIGHT-ELF.

His Fylgia can cause him to fall with honour amid the glory of battle and victory. For him the house of spirits cannot be dark, for thou wilt be there to receive him. The King of Shadows will unite thee to thy consort.

FRID.

Beautiful, but wild sound thy words. Shudderings pass through me. Dark seems to me life in the kingdom of the dead. Yet love lives there, and in

the Spirits' house I shall meet my consort. But afterwards, O Spirit of Light!—afterwards—shall he leave me? May I accompany him to Odin's radiant halls? May I not sit there on the seat by his side, and fill his cup with wine?

LIGHT-ELF.

Mortal! ask no more. No more can I tell. Deep are the councils of the gods, and the children of Alfhem cannot fathom them. Many a secret rests yet in the breast of the mighty; many a beauty, many a strength, which one day shall be revealed. Many stars, yet unknown, shall be kindled in the All-Father's heaven.

FRID.

And the life which shall be kindled in this celestial home—shall it no more die?

LIGHT-ELF.

That is known to the gods; we know it not.

FRID.

Radiant pictures hast thou given me, but surrounded by darkness. My soul is sorrowful.

LIGHT-ELF.

O daughter of man! Complain not, but humble thyself before the will of the gods. For too insigni-

ficant is man, that the gods on his account should lay open their sacred depths. Be satisfied with the light which their goodness bestows, and sink consoled into the All-Father's embrace. *[He disappears.*

SCENE V.

A wild Scene of Rocks. It is night.

KUMBA.

Where am I? I have lost my way. Around me glide the spectres of night, and over me thunders the Avenger. It is so dark both without and within my bosom; is so stifling. Air! light!

[Thunder and lightning. A tree near KUMBA falls headlong. She darts forward, and seeks refuge in a cleft of the rocks.

What was that? Ha! merely a tree which fell, struck by the thunderbolt. Why do I tremble? Why am I terrified? Are not these bare uplands familiar to me? Are they not pale scenes out of my soul's thunder-night? *[A pause.*

Why is it now so hushed, so silent? This silence is torture. Why gleam the wan stars so wildly over the crags? The whole sky is one cloud. Can they see through the clouds? What comes sailing there over the black ridge of rocks? Ah, merely a cloud, a dark thunder-cloud. It shrouds the stars;—good!

—I am tired of wandering about!—I have long gone round as in a magic circle;—I must rest.

[*Pauses. KUMBA leans against a rock, and afterwards proceeds more calmly.*

It is the hour when the wilderness is alive; when its miscreations, born at midnight, roam forth to visit the dwellings of man. The moon, the sun of dark spirits, sends abroad her wan beams to light them in their nocturnal way. There rides Mara on her dragon-steed, she who stifled King Vanland in his pleasant sleep, before he could say farewell to his family. There rise Dödmän and Dvalin's daughter from the bogs, and with peering eyes creep small spirits forth from their caves. Painful feelings, wicked thoughts go they to awaken in the souls of those who rest on their beds. They seek to create disquiet, I seek rest. I seek the sorceress, she who deceived me. I will compel her to keep her promise. But it is so dark; I cannot find again the way to her house. Who shall shew it to me? [*A whirlwind.*

Ha! the whirlwind, the spirit of the sorceress! That tells me that the old woman is not far off.

[*A fresh whirlwind.*

Again! Good. I come Grimgerda. Have thanks for thy strengthening summons.

[*Thunder and lightning.*

Why quakest thou, tree, till thy very roots tremble? Why this howling in the wood? Joturen makes

such a riot amongst the rocky hills that the giant-cauldrons ring. Startled creep the dwarfs back into their hiding-places, terrified at the thunder of the gods. Cowardly creatures of earth! Cold drops of perspiration, indeed, stand on my brow; but I shrink not away like you! Lighten, lighten, Father Thor, angry ruler of the cloudy air; and if I must be thy Thrall after death, then is it only reasonable that for once thou shouldst serve me, and light up my earthly way with thy flaming glances.

[*Fierce lightnings, amid which KUMBA disappears among the crags.*

SCENE VI.

A black mountain Cave. Within glimmers a red fire. A kettle stands on the fire; three Vipers hang over it, out of whose mouths venom drops. The Sorceress Grimgerda stirs the kettle while she mutters softly and makes mystic signs. Black-elves, wicked Disor, and Imps, move themselves restlessly in the cave. Two Wolves watch its entrance.

IMPS.

What is that which rustles?
What is that which bustles
In the wood and the dark out there?
A woman cometh hither!
Ah! now for a sly joke with her!
Quick! and we'll seize her ere she is aware!

GRIMGERDA.

Silence, witch-pack! to your places, or I shall teach you! If I receive company, what is that to you? If ye hold not your ungovernable tongues I will turn you into stones—as I once did with some of you—and you shall have to lick up the rain. Back into your caves, I say! Intoxicate yourselves with the substantial poison-fumes, and sleep in peace till I need you. Only my choice attendants shall remain near me. Out of the way, bantlings!

[The Imps being terrified away, four Shadow-shapes of a wild aspect remain about the Sorceress. The Wolves raise themselves and howl. At the same time enters KUMBA with a pale but defying face. GRIMGERDA strikes with her magic wand on the floor. The Wolves lie down, and KUMBA remains standing at the entrance of the Cave.]

GRIMGERDA.

Silence there, presumptuous child of man! I know thee.

KUMBA.

Dost thou know Kumba, the bondwoman's daughter? My feet mayst thou chain down, but not my will, my tongue.

GRIMGERDA.

Perhaps that too—if I wish it. But I wish it not—now. Come nearer. Why art thou come hither?

KUMBA.

To warn thee, witch, to keep thy vow.

GRIMGERDA.

What? thou dost not speak civilly.

KUMBA.

Give me rest! Give me rest! Thou promised to give me rest. But thou hast deceived me.

GRIMGERDA.

Speak not so loudly. Thou wilt waken my little ones who sleep.

KUMBA.

They sleep! It is now long since I have slept at all!

GRIMGERDA.

What dost thou want?

KUMBA.

Every thing. O Grimgerda! if thou hast a human heart in thy bosom, then conceive my distress, and help me. The strength which thou gavest me is gone. The tranquillity which I felt at one time is gone; an anguish consumes me, more tormenting, more horrible, than that which I experienced before my crimes. The light of the sun terrifies me; the mur-

mur of the trees makes me tremble ; no sleep rests on my eyelids ; no tear refreshes them ; and I cannot look upon her whom I have murdered, upon her who now wears away patiently in despair, without feeling my heart transpierced as with a poisoned dart. The dart is called—remorse. Remorse drives me to thee to-day. I will have my crime undone. Grimgerda ! thou who gavest the disease, knowest also the antidote. I entreat thee for a means to counteract the poison which kills the daughter of kings, the means to restore her again to life.

GRIMGERDA.

Doth the arrow, once discharged, stop and turn back in its flight ? Ask the stream to flow back to its source ; the ridge of rocks to bend itself according to the changing current of the wind ! Foolish mortal ! That which is done cannot be undone ; and a strong spirit denies not its own work.

KUMBA.

Thou can'st not ?

GRIMGERDA.

Cannot, because I will not ; will not, because Jernskog's daughter cannot vacillate and repent.

KUMBA.

Can gold purchase salvation for the daughter of kings ?

GRIMGERDA.

I love gold; but I will not deceive thee. Gold and treasure cannot save her. She must die.

KUMBA.

It is determined then. She must die, and I——
I am miserable!

GRIMGERDA.

Poor child!

KUMBA.

Dost thou pity me? Thou understandest me then; and there lives a heart in thy bosom. O Grimgerda! be good to me! I have suffered so much! Hast thou, too, suffered? Knowest thou the sorrow which devours the heart?

GRIMGERDA.

I understand thee, and—it grieves me for thee. Here, my child, eat and strengthen thyself. Then we will talk further.

KUMBA.

No, no! I cannot eat.

GRIMGERDA.

Such good is not often offered. It gives clearness and learning in a variety of ways.

KUMBA.

Give me peace! Give me a draught out of the cup of forgetfulness.

GRIMGERDA.

The dead only drink that.

KUMBA.

Give me death then! Let one of thy serpents sting me.

GRIMGERDA.

Serpents do not sting their like.

KUMBA.

Thy words, Grimgerda, sting all the more. But I will forgive thee all, if thou wilt but give me death and forgetfulness,—eternal, if possible.

GRIMGERDA.

They only, who have not done something on earth memorable, *something great*, in good or in *evil*, can in death taste of the cup of oblivion.

KUMBA.

Woe is me! The draught is not for me then. Listen! There is a sleep, a trance, between life and death, in which man feels neither snow nor rain, neither day nor the heat of the sun; knows nothing,

feels nothing, except a reluctance to awake. Say, canst thou not plunge me into that?

GRIMGERDA.

Thou desirest that which can alone be the lot of mighty spirits. Kumba, daughter of the bondwoman, thou art not ripe for that.

KUMBA.

That too, dost thou deny me? (*wildly*). Well then, witch! discharge thy vow in another manner. I bought it dearly, and will not have done it for nothing. Thou promised my soul rest, and thou shalt keep thy promise, or I swear by Nastrand

GRIMGERDA.

Silence, wretched slave! Darest thou to menace me? Abase thyself! Creep like a worm in the dust at my feet, or thou shalt ride on the wolf, and be stung by serpents. Fall down this instant, and beg pardon, or

KUMBA.

Or what? Dost thou think that thou canst frighten me, Grimgerda? The pure light of the sun can terrify me, and the whispering of spirits in the wood can make me tremble; but thee—thee I fear not! Shew me the torture which thou hast in thy power that is greater than that which I already know. Let

thy wolves tear me to pieces. I will laugh at it. But in the hour itself of my death, dread thou me, Grimgerda! It is not equal between us. What have I to lose, to fear? Nothing! But thou, witch, canst lose thy power and thy wealth. Tremble then! for I feel in my suffering heart a power which is greater than thine! Tremble, at the curse which in the hour of death shall issue from my pallid lips—tremble!

GRIMGERDA (*aside*).

Ha! Strength! strength! Great strength! Good; thou shalt serve a still greater cunning. [*aloud*.

Kumba! To what purpose this childish insolence and defiance? Why wilt thou provoke only an increase of thy misery? Be quiet, be obedient, and I both can and will keep thee.

KUMBA.

Ah, say how! Pardon my defiance, O Grimgerda. I am still and obedient. Speak, speak!

GRIMGERDA.

All the torments of thy soul proceed from this, that thou standest on the half-way. The escape from thy misery is called *completion*!

KUMBA.

Speak more plainly.



GRIMGERDA.

Enter fully and for ever into my service. The first matter which I will give thee to complete shall be the ratification of our compact.

KUMBA.

And what shall be my reward?

GRIMGERDA.

Thou shall acquire great power already in this life. After death, I will awake thee, and doubly great power shall be given thee to injure the great on the earth, for no power exceeds that of the departed spirit. Thou shalt become as one of mine own, as one of the mighty Disor, which thou hast seen around me.

KUMBA.

Have they peace?

GRIMGERDA.

Observe them.

KUMBA.

I see no pain in their features. There seems to play over their sallow lips a smile; but it is not glad. The countenances of some appear restless, and yet on the point of being changed into stone.

GRIMGERDA.

Thou seest them now in their twilight costumes, in their night mantles, in which they recently made a journey into the world of men. But they do not always appear thus dim. When I will it, they glitter in their holiday attire, and at my beck a splendour surrounds them which surpasses that of the temple of Upsala. See for thyself.

[The Sorceress waves a wand, and the Cave all over appears as beaming with gold. The Witch and the Disors are seen in splendid dresses, and with jewelled crowns on their heads. After a pause, GRIMGERDA speaks.]

Now, what thinkest thou?

KUMBA.

That is grand! (*aside.*) But they are none the handsomer for it.

GRIMGERDA.

What sayest thou?

KUMBA.

I say that is grand!

GRIMGERDA.

Yes, I think so. The like shall not be seen in the dwelling of the most ostentatious Jarl.

[She makes another sign with the staff, and the splendour disappears.]

KUMBA.

But it seemed to me that the gold was red as glowing fire, and that I saw lizards and spiders running about amongst the precious stones.

GRIMGERDA.

That is because thou art unaccustomed to such pomp; and therefore it causes, as it were, spiders' webs before thy eyes. But not only splendour and affluence are here offered by us, but joy too; and thou mayst well believe that it goes often right merrily here. Here one knows neither anguish nor remorse. Here we eat and drink well,—sleep when we will; and between whiles, dance and frisk to our hearts' content. Thou shalt have a specimen.

[GRIMGERDA *blows a horn. The Cave seems at once to become alive. Black Elves, Dwarfs, and Spirits swarm forth, and riot about in a wild dance.*

KUMBA (*aside*).

Afgrund's music to Afgrund's dance. Is this joy? No, it is frenzy!

(*Aloud to the Imps, that will drag her into the dance.*)

Away from me, ye wild beasts! ye foul hobgoblins! I have no desire for your joy. Grimgerda, let the tasteless dance have an end. It is irksome.

GRIMGERDA.

It is not so easy to compel them to cease when

they are become well heated in the dance. Cold water must then be had recourse to.

*[She strikes with the witch-wand on the rocks.
Streams of water spring forth upon the dancing
goblins, who fly, howling and hurrying, terrified
into their dens. The Witch laughs.]*

GRIMGERDA.

This merriment moves thee not, because thou art unused to it. But ask my imps whether they think the dance tedious. When thou hast been some time with us, thou wilt find it as delightful as they do.

KUMBA (*sighs*).

GRIMGERDA.

Well, bondmaiden, hast thou a desire to become free in my service?

KUMBA (*indignantly*).

Like one of these?

GRIMGERDA.

No, freer. Listen, Kumba. I mean well by thee, and have something great in store for thee. I have discovered in thee a higher power than exists in all those who are about me, a power worthy of mine. I will give thee a commission, which an ordinary spirit could not accomplish. If thou executest it according

to my instructions, the torment in thy bosom shall not only cease for ever, but I will regard thee as my daughter. Thou shalt partake of my wealth; and thy power to injure the great, and to command the low, shall become like mine. Thou shalt partake with me my dwelling; and when thou wilt, thou shalt change it into a gorgeous palace, and adorn thyself with

KUMBA.

Let us make the business short. At what price wilt thou have my soul?

GRIMGERDA.

Listen! and observe well my words. In the strongly-fortified castle, on the other side of the water, dwells a Jarl, named Harold Sigurdson

KUMBA.

I know him. A handsome, and a brave man, and a friend of King Dag.

GRIMGERDA.

I hate him; but still more fiercely do I hate his wife, the proud Herborg.

KUMBA.

Very well.

GRIMGERDA.

They have a child—a boy of three years old. His parents' greatest delight.

KUMBA.

That beautiful child I have carried in my arms!

GRIMGERDA.

Thou shalt kill that child.

KUMBA.

I?!—A little child?!

GRIMGERDA.

And before its heart's-blood cools, thou shalt—
drink it.

KUMBA.

Detestable!

GRIMGERDA.

That only can for ever take away thy soul's
sickness.

KUMBA.

No, no! I cannot do it.

GRIMGERDA.

By this means only canst thou acquire my friendship, and participate in my affluence and my power; by this alone can the bondwoman's daughter become a free and mighty being.

KUMBA.

Great gods preserve me !

GRIMGERDA.

Dost thou imagine that the gods will trouble themselves about thee? But I understand thy remorse, Kumba. Nature shudders at extraordinary deeds; but it is precisely this which separates the strong from the despicable spirit,—the power to conquer the weakness of nature.

KUMBA.

Short and good, I will not do it! Do with me what thou wilt—I do it not!

GRIMGERDA.

Do it not? Do it not? We will see that! Thou shalt, thou must, thou shalt! Thou goest not hence alive, if thou refusest to do it.

KUMBA.

Let thy wolves rend me to pieces,—I will not do it. My hate, impelled by wild passions, I could seek to gratify; but an innocent child, which never offended me—no! so fallen I am not. Thanks, Grimgerda, that thou restorest my strength. I can now, miserable as I am, detest and despise thy treasures.

GRIMGERDA.

Art thou proud of thy cowardice? Offspring of wretches, go! Thou art not worthy to be near the sorceress. Go, paltry one, and remain the slave of the Jarls.

KUMBA.

Better that, than to be like thee.

GRIMGERDA.

Wretch! dost thou exalt thyself above me? Miserable, cowardly murderess! who hast not the strength to resist evil, hast not the courage to be strong in crime. Contemptible slave, be gone! My wolves would loathe thy spongy carcass! Go! but bear with thee the curse which I announce to thee—"Thou shalt neither find rest here, nor hereafter! Vacillating, dizzy, wavering, thou shalt wander about from morrow to morrow, and wear away thy life in anguish. Thou shalt wither as the thistle withers in the narrow clefts of the rocks. Thou shalt faint in the desert like the hunted wolf, and the sons of lamentation shall extend to thee a bitter drink of the poisonous tears of regret. After death shall thy dastard soul reside amid the fog in the marshes of the corpse-coast, and in vain shalt thou attempt to lift thyself out of it to the high land. In vain shalt thou stretch forth thy shadowy arms to embrace a creature that can love

thee. Alone and miserable, shalt thou be tossed about by the wind, and seek earth's abodes only to terrify the innocent child, which loses itself in thy neighbourhood; and thy life and thy being shall be—unblessedness!

KUMBA (*coldly*).

Thou tellest only what I already know. Hast thou no better curse, witch!

GRIMGERDA.

Yes, I have; and though it costs me dear, it shall be pronounced—to crush thee. Know then, Kumba, that there is *one* who could save thee; who could give thee rest here on the earth, and after death bear up thy spirit to a glorious lot in the everlasting light—yes; if thou hadst sacrificed to him thy presumption, thy revenge, thy hate, as he desired of thee. But against him hast thou raved; the deliverer hast thou cast from thee, and eternally hereafter shall his shape haunt thee, punishing and avenging——Behold him, and tremble!

[GRIMGERDA *waves her magic wand, and pronounces the following words with great exertion and with averted face.*

Thou whom I saw with the pale Hel! Thou whose countenance I cannot endure to behold!——White god without spot, without malice! Darling of the

creator! Balder the good! Thee do I evoke to the circle of the earth! Thee do I call in the might of the powers of Afgrund to appear upon this spot, in order to avenge thyself! In the awful name of the eternal justice——

[A bright light fills the bottom of the Cave. In the midst of it appears the beautiful shape of a youth full of majesty and mildness, who fixes on KUMBA a severe and painful look. GRIMGERDA remains standing, but with averted head, as if turned to stone. KUMBA gives a piercing shriek of inexpressible agony, and falls with outstretched arms on the earth. The scene vanishes; all becomes dark again, and a shrill laugh of mockery is raised by the Goblins who come into active motion.]

SCENE VII.

FRID reclines in a half-sitting posture on a splendid Couch near the window. KUMBA stands at her feet and contemplates her. The sun is going down.

FRID.

Soon—soon will all be over! Soon shall I journey to the second light. For the last time do I bow my head before thee, O earth's glorious sun! Thanks that thou yet a while wilt warm my bosom with thy

beams. Thanks for this last friendly caress. I see, but I feel it not. My life's sun also goes down, but the peace of even has descended on my heart, and I feel it—it is beautiful to die!

Ah! even in death my dim gaze turns towards the sea, and looks earnestly for the sail of the beloved, and calls him hence. But when he comes he will no more find his bride. She has gone away, but merely the better to follow and serve him. My soul is reconciled to death.

KUMBA (*aside*).

That which stirs within me no mortal can comprehend.

FRID.

Yes, my spirit is reconciled; all murmuring, all complaint, is departed. Mine eye, indeed, is dim; but one thing is yet clear and certain to me—death will not destroy my love, will not separate me from the beloved. See there shines already in the cloud Asabron, surrounded by the roarings of the heavenly water. Welcome to me, O sign of the favour of the gods, which shews me the way that I shall travel. I come quickly! All-Father! I am ready, for I am at peace with heaven, at peace with the earth!

KUMBA (*aside*).

How bright she grows! How I blacken! Woe!

I hate her no longer. Hate has turned its point against myself.

FRID.

Kumba! My faithful attendant! Thanks for the affection thou hast shewn me on earth. Take this costly jewel in remembrance of me. Be free, Kumba; be rich and happy!

KUMBA.

Daughter of kings, I desire only one thing of thee.

FRID.

And what?

KUMBA.

Thy hatred. Know that thou diest by my hand; by the poison received from the bondmaiden. Know that she, like a snake, bit fast into thy heart, and sucked pleasure from thy torments; know that she long hated thee

FRID.

Almighty gods! Thou, Kumba? Ah, wherefore?

KUMBA.

For thy happiness; for thy beauty; for thy union with King Dag, whom I love; for the injustice of the gods, who gave thee all, and me nothing; for the pangs which envy and jealousy occasioned me! For all this have I hated thee, and taken revenge.

FRID.

O Kumba! Kumba! Thou couldst think thus of me; and I held thee so dear, and put such trust in thee.

KUMBA.

I have deceived thee. This hand has murdered thee. Abhor me; hate me!

FRID.

I sink into the All-Father's embrace. Thy hand gave me poison; but a higher hand has sealed my doom. I have gained by it, for I know that life and love will continue beyond death. For myself I complain no more, but for thee my soul sorroweth. Before I go, take my forgiveness.

KUMBA.

Canst thou *forgive* me?!

FRID.

O Kumba, hate not; I cannot hate, and therefore has my soul peace; but bitterness only is a torment in death. Thou hast not done me much wrong, Kumba! Thy mind was exasperated,—I understand it now. Pardon me, that in thy presence I was so happy, and did not notice thy suffering! Nay,—gaze not so wildly upon me;—give me thy hand. Let a

tear of reconciliation moisten thine eye. Thou wert unhappy. That was the fault.

KUMBA (*aside*).

Exists goodness so great, love so unbounded? Woe is me! What have I done? My heart will burst!

FRID.

Thy lips move wildly, but I hear no sound. Dost thou remember, Kumba, the years of our childhood? Rememberest thou, when thou first came to me wounded, mishandled. These hands healed thy wounds, these eyes wept over thee. I loved thee at that moment, and I have loved thee ever since,—and now my spirit cannot depart in peace if thou hatest me. A stern power of witchcraft must have bound up thy heart. But thou shalt not thus harden thyself. Come nearer, Kumba, I will yet once more weep over thee.

KUMBA.

Thou has transpierced! . . . Behold me at thy feet. Hear my last prayer!

FRID.

My Kumba! speak.

KUMBA.

Let me die with thee. Let the same pile which sends thy soul on high, bear also to the other world that of thy guilty servant. In the realm of shadows I will slave for thee.

FRID.

Follow me in death. The God of gods will then determine our fate. Perhaps in a higher light, the daughter of kings and the bondmaiden are merely empty names. Let thy soul cling to mine; never was it nearer to me. We will both watch over him, whom we both loved.

KUMBA.

O these tears! they are a transport! Let me bathe thy hand with them.

FRID.

Bathe my hand with them; they warm my heart. O look out on the sea, Kumba!

KUMBA.

Gods! it is he!

FRID.

He comes! Methought that was his white flag
..... my eyes are dim. He comes!

KUMBA.

Thou wilt not see him! Thou diest! O thou must,
must hate me!

FRID.

No I forgive thee. Forgive thyself!

KUMBA.

Now! thou diest!

FRID (*with arms extended towards the sea*).

I go to the second light! Thou, O my Dag,
never shall I see thee again! [*She dies.*]

KUMBA.

Dead? Yes, dead! It is over! I will die also.
Powers of vengeance, your judgment is upon me. She
pardoned me, but can you pardon? In your hands
I leave my guilty soul. Mighty Thor, accept the
offering; and if with wild wings thou pursue round
the earth my peace-abandoned soul, I will not sigh,
I will not complain! I have deserved it. But one
day—I know it—comes a greater than thou!
Will he take compassion on me? Will he permit the
repentant spirit to find a quiet shore? O can
there be pardon? can there be atonement?!

[*She sinks down at the foot of FRID's bed.*]

LOW AND DISTANT CHORUS OF SPIRITS OF LIGHT.

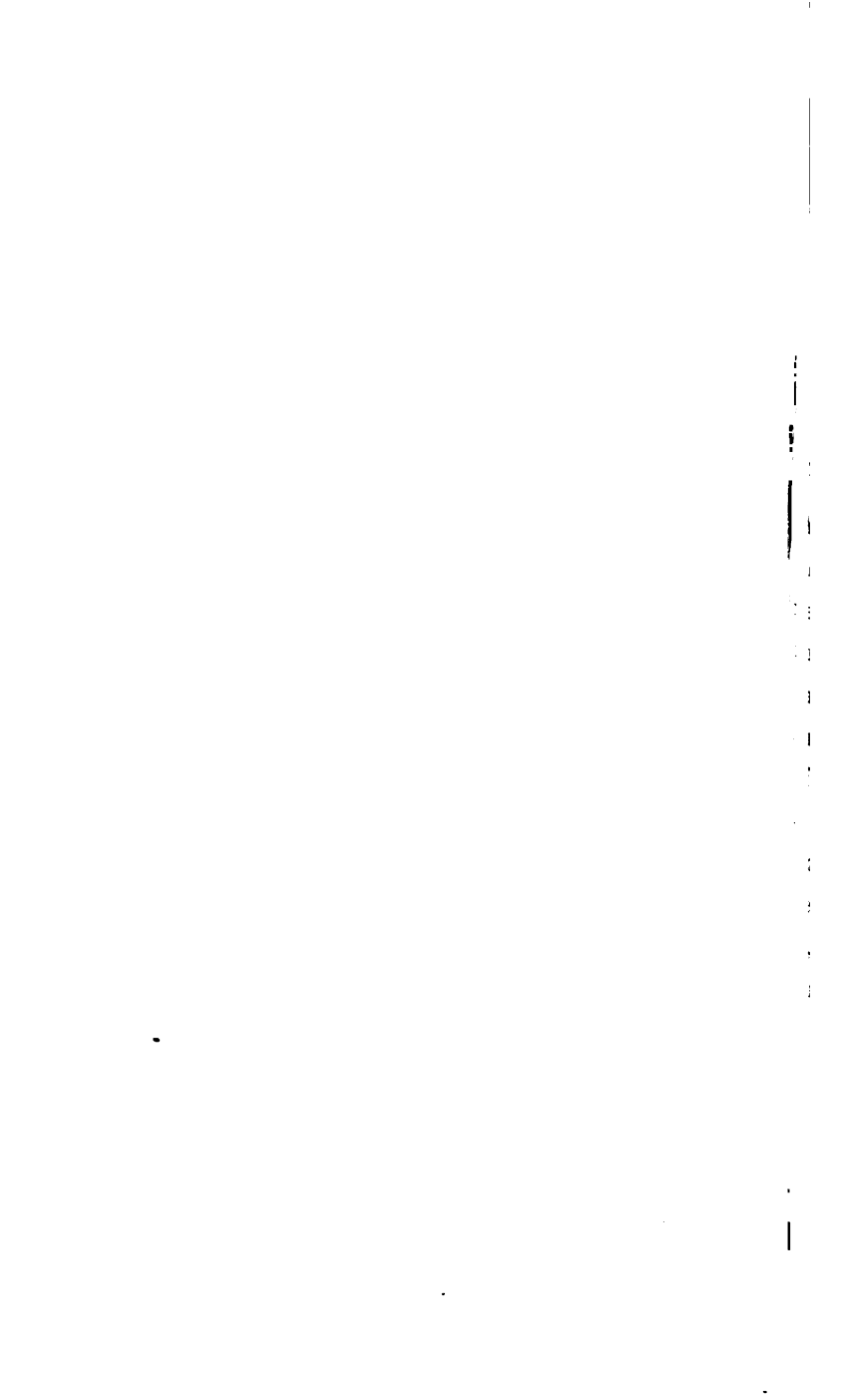
From the depths, and
From the heights, will
There be heard a voice,
That to captive and to mourner
Shall proclaim—" Rejoice!"

Dumb shall grow each
Elfin chorus,
But in heaven's acclaim—
Loftier spirits
Shall adore the
World-Redeemer's name.

LESSER STORIES.

VOL. II.

F



A NOTE TO THE PUBLIC.

COURTEOUS PUBLIC,

A book is a traveller who betakes himself into the world, and is commonly provided with a letter of recommendation, either in the form of a Preface, in which the Author modestly steps forward, and prays to find acceptance; or in a Postscript, by which the Author recommends himself. If the book be its own letter of recommendation, it is indeed the very best of all. In the very easily comprehensible anxiety that it may not be the case here, one hastens, first of all, to send in a little note, which may, in the warmest manner, recommend to the considerate kindness of the public this little book, and, at the same time, its little

AUTHORESS.

AXEL AND ANNA:

OR,

CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN TWO LOVERS.*

AXEL TO ANNA.

FROM henceforth let the February storm roar at my windows, destroy them, burst into my chamber, and cover me, and every thing that is to be found there, with his ice-mantle; henceforth let my uncle thunder and curse, let the maids scold, the dogs howl, the parrots scream. In my heart is spring—the world is an Eden, human beings are angels; and I am happy. Anna loves me! O tell it me once again! Is it then really true—is it possible? Anna, do you love me?

* The original title is literally "Correspondence between two Stories;" which, however, conveys no idea to an English reader. The Swedes, like most of the continental nations and the Scotch, live several families in one house, each occupying a story, or suite of apartments. These lovers, as will be seen, lived thus, and carried on their correspondence from different stories of the same house.

M. H.

ANNA TO AXEL.

I was yesterday at a ball—I danced—heard compliments,—nothing pleased me. Wherefore? Axel was not there! Is not this an answer to your question, Axel?

AXEL TO ANNA.

WITH A ROSE.

Take the rose! In it so fair
Is thy charming visage beaming;
In the rose's crimson gleaming
Shines love's image also there.

Yet I would not see displayed,
Type of our love in it either;
Roses fade away and wither,
But our love will never fade.

From the days of Adam even,
Were they different from each other;
Earth is but the rose's mother,
Love, it is the child of heaven.

ANNA TO AXEL.

The rose is placed in water, your poem rests on my heart; and yet I am not content. What does this heart then desire? To-day it is five days since I have seen you. If you could only persuade your uncle to call upon us—but I know that is impossible. Therefore, peace, peace, spirit of disquiet!

AXEL TO ANNA.

O that I could cause an earthquake, so that the two stories should fall together—that I could stamp the floor through, and suddenly descend to where my thoughts and feelings always dwell! These, Anna, are simple possibilities in comparison with the impossibility of making the wilful old man move one step. I have stood a whole hour arguing with him. One must live *with* the world, whilst one lives *in* the world.—“No!” “Uncle, you look rather unwell?” “No!” “Uncle, you must take some relaxation.” “No!” “Talk politics with lively neighbours.” “No!” “Uncle, you become a hermit.” “No!” “Dear Uncle.” “No!” My dear, best Uncle.” “No, and no, and no!”

After considering this chain of denials, which is more insurmountable than the Alps or Pyrenees, I proposed to myself several questions. “Wilt thou, through longing, bring a consumption upon thyself?” “No!” “Or the jaundice, from pure vexation?” “No; at least not in this instance.” “Wilt thou make thyself happy?” “Yes.” “See Anna?” “Yes.” Make the essay now?” “Yes.”—Hurrah!

AXEL TO ANNA.

Did not succeed. Closed doors. Your aunt has a cold—receives no visit. But now I *will* and *shall* see you. I know what I will do. I will go and place

myself in the street, directly opposite your window. And should you not come to the window, I will stand there until I turn to stone.

ANNA TO AXEL.

Now, in the rain? That I forbid. Do you not see that the rain pours down in streams from heaven.

AXEL TO ANNA.

Wet as a sea-god, but happy as—as myself (there is no happier one), I sit again in my room and write to you upon a thick pile of paper, which I should copy for my uncle. But now I am content with all. I have seen you. I find every thing beautiful—even my uncle's style. How charming you are, Anna! You have really more than one point of resemblance with the Crown Princess, without which, now, no one can be pretty. She has large, heavenly blue eyes. Yours are certainly smaller, but equally heavenly. Truly she has *dark*-brown hair, and you light-brown; but the form of the little head—of the bewitching little head—is completely the same; and when I only think of your little nose,—like hers, so fine, small, and enchanting,—O I fall into ecstasy!

ANNA TO AXEL.

But I am *not* in ecstasy, I am not charmed; I am dissatisfied, anxious. You have certainly taken cold;

you will have a cold in the head—catarrh—fever—will perhaps die! To stand a whole hour in the cold and heavy rain! Axel, I cannot pardon you!

AXEL TO ANNA.

We come to-day, towards evening, to call upon you—we come to call, my most dear uncle, and his most obedient nephew. God bless the old man for his heavenly idea! Only take care that the door of the antechamber be not locked—that we can, unobserved, enter so far that we are not met with the eternal untruth, that “the family is not at home.”

Cold in the head—catarrh! Yes, I sneeze and cough,—but only from impatience. I have fever,—but it is a fever of joy.

AXEL TO ANNA.

I could die from vexation. Did not Mr. P——, the eternal, unbearable Mr. P——, step in at the door just as we would go out? My uncle turned back; I gnashed my teeth. Mr. P—— seats himself. I double my fist. “We would just pay a visit,” I began (God knows in what tone). “We must ——” “We must put that out of our minds,” said the uncle, interrupting the words of the nephew; “it can take place another time.” I banged the door to, with such violence that Mr. P—— started up from his chair.

ANNA TO AXEL.

Recipe for a Cold and Fever.

Drink three glasses of cold water, one after the other. N.B.—Only one every quarter of an hour. Between each go three times up and down the room. N.B.—Only one step is made in a minute; and at every step repeat—

Be pious and good,
Be patient of mood.

AXEL TO ANNA.

A bad cure; does no good. I have thought of one for myself. Lend me a curl of hair; only one, a single one from among the hundred which you have; only one—a single one. I will lay it on my mouth, on my forehead, on my eyes, on my heart. O do not refuse it me! Otherwise I shall fall most seriously ill. A lock of hair, good Anna, a single one!

AXEL TO ANNA.

[*An hour later.*

A curl! Can you really be so cruel, and refuse it me? See, I lie on my knees and pray for it.

AXEL TO ANNA.

[*Half an hour later.*

A curl, a curl, a curl!

AXEL TO ANNA.

[A quarter of an hour later.]

I beg most humbly pardon for being thus often troublesome. This time shall certainly be the last; if not——shall I have a curl, or not?

ANNA TO AXEL.

Here, you have it—bad, impatient man! I sub-join a small fragment of a conversation which was held between me and my aunt, by the light of two sleepy, pale candle-flames.

AUNT.—Men are tyrants.

I.—Yes, truly, that they are.

AUNT.—Despots who, by flatteries or by power, accomplish their wishes.

I.—Yes, yes; alas, it is so!

AUNT.—Never marry, my child.

I.—No; God forbid, dear aunt.

Sleep well, Axel.

AXEL TO ANNA.

Command me, Anna, to stand six hours in heavy rain just under your window; command me to go six

miles for a flower which you wish to have ; command me to kneel fourteen days ; command me to have all my hair cut off to stuff your pillow ; command me at the next ball, after the heart's-waltz, to dance eight times, one after the other, with the full-rigged man-of-war, the dry Mrs. N. ; command, beautiful tyrant ! I obey. Command me, above all, that I come up every evening to snuff your candle. Its weak flame seems to exercise a darkening influence upon the otherwise clear lights of your understanding.

ANNA TO AXEL.

I command you to-day, between twelve or one o'clock, to stand in the doorway, or to walk up and down before the house. You can then greet us, and see my beautiful new bonnet, which my cousin, Lieutenant Emil Papperto, has assured me is very becoming to me.

AXEL TO ANNA.

The bonnet suits you very ill. The crown is too large, the poke too small. Your face looks in it as large and round as the full moon. I beg you to make Lieutenant Papperto a present of the bonnet, and for his good taste let him himself make use of it.

If you will step this afternoon to the window you shall see me ride past on my new horse, my beautiful Hercules, which I received yesterday as a present from my uncle. I am very well satisfied with the

horse, since the five charming Miss Mullitons assured me (when I waited upon them this morning) that they had never seen such a beautiful animal.

ANNA TO AXEL.

If the beauty of a horse consists in having thick legs, a thick neck, a large head, large ears, and in galloping like a cow, Hercules is certainly unusually beautiful, quite unusually beautiful. If my counsel should be followed, I would beg Mr. Axel W. to make the five charming Miss Mullitons a present of the horse, and for their good taste let them make use of him.

AXEL TO ANNA.

If Miss Anna L. were somewhat gentler, and less biting, it would be far more becoming.

ANNA TO AXEL.

If Mr. Axel W. think of paying a visit on the story below him, I must inform him herewith that the family is not at home.

AXEL TO ANNA.

If Miss Anna L. believed Mr. Axel W. had any such intention, I must herewith inform her that she was mistaken.

AXEL TO ANNA.

[Two days later.]

Anna's name-day! I have ridden six miles to-day

in the early morning to fetch out of the Baron R's hothouse this bouquet, which Anna, I hope, will not be so cruel as to scorn.

AXEL TO ANNA.

I hope that you have received the bouquet. It was certainly not particularly beautiful; but in this season flowers are difficult to get.

AXEL TO ANNA.

For three nights I have not closed my eyes. I really believe that animal Hercules, which I have ridden several days, shakes one too much. To-day I have spoken with Franz Kunninger, and he will take the creature off my hands, although perhaps for only half the sum he cost. But I do not ask after that if I can only get rid of him.

AXEL TO ANNA.

Anna!

ANNA TO AXEL.

Axel! I have thrown my new bonnet into the fire. I think my aunt would receive a visit this evening, if any one came; that is to say, if a certain old gentleman came—young ones she cannot endure. Yet I am of the opinion, that a certain young gentleman, who should steal in behind the back of a certain old one, would produce no bad effect.

AXEL TO ANNA.

My angel-girl, what a fortunate concurrence of circumstances! Your aunt receives visits this evening, and my excellent uncle wishes this evening to pay visits. He brushes the dust off himself with such zeal, that I could kiss him for it.

He has fully determined that the acquaintance shall commence to-day, since he has remarked that his servant is paying court to your aunt's housemaid, and to this he says he will put an end.

I have given the old gentleman various rules for behaviour. I have told him that now gentlemen kiss the hands of the ladies. He answered that this was a stupid fashion; *I* find it full of spirit. O Anna! thus I can once more kiss your hand,—your hand,—O joy!

Should Mr. P—— come now, I strike him dead.

AXEL TO ANNA.

Millions of years would I give for an evening such as that of yesterday.

Anna, you looked like an angel with your curling hair and white dress—and a good advisable angel were you to me, you made me the happiest of those beings who breathe the air of this earth. How happy am I, and how happy must you be,—you who have made me so happy! O good God, what heavenly moments has one not on this earth against which one says so much that is bad! My uncle and your aunt

did not dream that whilst they on the sofa by lamp-light were working to dissolve one engagement, we in the twilight at the window closed another. I am like another man since I feel your ring on my finger. Anna mine! My Anna! O what a good and noble being must I now become!

AXEL TO ANNA.

How clear is the heaven, how fresh the air! I must breathe fresh air, my happiness oppressed me. I went out, almost danced through the city, sung aloud, behaved in such a manner that every one stared at me, and I had the desire to embrace every one. In my breast is a happiness which could make happy half a world. Anna, how I love you!

ANNA TO AXEL.

I also am unspeakably happy. Men love more passionately; but whether better, whether truer—Axel—that we shall perhaps experience in ourselves. I also feel myself better and nobler. I will become good, gentle, true, in one word a really amiable wife, and make Axel happy. Upon this I now think, whether I walk, stand, sit; whether I sew, play, sing or read; and that causes nothing to be either done well, or at the right time. “What is the matter with thee girl?” demanded my aunt a short time since; “I think thou hast a fever, thy eyes sparkle so—dost thou feel headache?” “I feel rather something at

my heart," answered I. "I must take immediately a good dose of Hoffmann's drops." Thou laughest? I also.

AXEL TO ANNA.

"What is come to thee, boy, why art thou so absent?" asked my uncle yesterday. "Wilt thou write so? The paper upside down, the pen upside down? Boy, I believe thou art quite upside down thyself!" "Ah, uncle—have you ever been in love?" "In love, boy? Yes; but then I thought also of marrying." "Yes, I also think of doing so." "Also of doing so? When one has nothing to live upon? Has ever such a thing been heard? Let us see; thou hast monthly thirty-six shillings from me; out of this thou wilt use twelve shillings to hold thy wedding; twelve shillings to commence thy housekeeping; there yet remains to thee twelve shillings and God's mercy for thee to live upon the remainder of thy life. Nay, I congratulate thee. Sunshine for dinner, and moonshine for supper; see, one shall get quite fat upon it!"

Wretched, when people to whom nature has denied every kind of judgment will be witty! Wretched that it should just occur to him to speak of his thirty-six *shillings*!

ANNA TO AXEL.

Did you see the poor woman with the children in

the street just opposite? How miserable they were! I cannot help them, I have nothing now; but you?

AXEL TO ANNA.

Just now I received the money for Hercules, and more than I expected. For what do I want a horse? I can walk. I hasten.

AXEL TO ANNA.

[A day later.]

They are assisted; not alone for the moment, I hope, but for ever. They have a dwelling, clothes, food, work. They can and will work. I do not speak of their joy; through excess, it resembled sorrow. I prayed her to bless you. I am most sincerely happy.

ANNA TO AXEL.

A basketful of flowers and fruit, and undermost, five rows of Roman pearls, was brought me this morning by a little unknown girl. From whom she did not know—she had only received the command to deliver it to me. Axel, it is from you—that I know. Axel, Axel, such presents from you, who have little for yourself! I cannot receive it.

AXEL TO ANNA.

If you will cause me a bilious fever, you will say no. Good Anna, that you accept these trifles is

my recompense—(mine, do you hear)—for wandering about the whole day, more like a beast than a man, out of pure philanthropy, without enjoying a single mouthful as big as a pin's-head; and for ultimately being obliged, at supper, to listen to a severe curtain-lecture from my uncle.

Regarding my finances, be quite easy. And the money for Hercules—should that, perhaps, lie by unused? I have money remaining. I can establish myself, my gracious lady.

ANNA TO AXEL.

In order to preserve you from a bilious fever, I will certainly accept this time your gift. But make me no more, I pray you; and at least, not again so soon.

• AXEL TO ANNA.

When will that time, that happy time arrive, when I shall have the right to give you every thing, and you no longer have the right to refuse? When will the time arrive when I shall no longer require the pen as the interpreter of my feelings? When shall I speak with you—when dare to see you?

This is for me the Gordian-knot which I in vain strive to unloosen. I have the greatest desire to do like Alexander, and at one stroke to cut it through by carrying you off. After many fruitless attempts, I have perceived the impossibility of coming to you by

any usual and natural means. Now I have the most desperate designs in my head. You have certainly heard speak of the ingenious man, who, in order to embrace his mistress, set her house on fire. What do you think of him?

ANNA TO AXEL.

That he was, is, and remains, an incendiary; and of such a one I entertain the greatest horror.

AXEL TO ANNA.

To place a ladder at a window, and, upon the wings of love, float up and in at the window, is and looks so strangely thief-like. But Anna, to make a visit in a balloon has never, I believe, taken place since the time of that Turk who, according to the Persian legend, thus visited his fair one under the name of Mahomet. This would not be an impossibility; and I see possibilities in every thing, except in being longer able to live without seeing you.

ANNA TO AXEL.

To all heathenish visitors, let them enter even by ladders or in balloons, I am not at home. I declare that such a one I will not know, much less love.

AXEL TO ANNA.

Why do you never shew yourself at the window—why never go out—why is a call never accepted?

Why do you shut yourself up thus wilfully, thus eternally. Does this happen on my account?

ANNA TO AXEL.

My best Axel, my aunt is very ill—you know this. I dare not leave her a moment. With the greatest difficulty I steal away to write to you; and beg you, for God's sake, neither set our house on fire nor break my windows. Do you think that, among phials of drops and recipes, I am particularly comfortable? But the only thing I can do, the only thing also which you must do, is to be quiet, and await the proper time.

AXEL TO ANNA.

To be quiet! You might as well say this to the storm which now rages till the whole house trembles, I could wish that it would overturn it, if it, with a breath from the spirit of love, would cast you into my arms. Anna, what I now say, you must not take so literally. I wrestle with Fate and will bring her to yield, let this cost what it will.

AXEL TO ANNA.

Human beings have, after all, neither leopards' nor tigers' hearts in their breasts, my Anna! Do you not believe, that if we were to disclose our love to our relatives they would allow us now and then to see each other? Anna, you are my sun, the light

of my eyes. If you conceal yourself longer, all around me will become pitch-dark.

Shall we dare the experiment? We have so little to lose by it, so much to win. Say yes!

ANNA TO AXEL.

You are right, Axel; we must make the trial. Do you speak first with your uncle; and when I have heard what he has said, I shall have more courage to reveal myself to my aunt. She is now somewhat better.

AXEL TO ANNA.

“Speak with your uncle;” this is uncommonly easily said—but *done*, that is something quite different. Do you know, my uncle is a man who has quite a peculiar humour, and above all, peculiar eyes. With these he can fix a person who is going to say something that does not please him, in such a manner that the word remains sticking in the poor fellow’s throat to all eternity; and then such a tempest rises as can certainly be compared with none in Sweden, but only with those hurricanes which rage in the West-Indian islands. In the mean while I will sew myself a fur garment out of Job’s patience and Solomon’s wisdom, and dare the attempt.

ANNA TO AXEL.

No, no; be cautious! If you believe that it will

displease him so much, and you have not courage enough, it is the best that we drive the whole attempt out of our minds.

AXEL TO ANNA.

Also quite easily said. But before I give up a resolution which I have once taken, may hurricanes, ten times more raging than the one which I will now brave, tear me into a thousand pieces, and blow them to all parts of the world. Farewell; I am now armed for the fight, and — I go!

ANNA TO AXEL.

Wait, Axel, wait! Ah, my dear friend, I fear this is a precipitate step. It is possible they may not consent in the least. Besides, we are both of us still so young.

AXEL TO ANNA.

I am in my twenty-second year, already last autumn I was one-and-twenty, therefore I am of age. You are quite seventeen.

ANNA TO AXEL.

That is true—and perhaps we are old enough. But ah, Axel, this is the least! I see a thousand impossibilities before us. It is possible our relatives will not on any account give their consent to our union. We really have nothing, my friend! You

have no situation, no money; I equally am entirely without fortune. It would be—it is, really foolish with such narrow circumstances to wish to marry. Let us wait, my friend, and well consider, before we risk a step which I now begin to fear might separate us for ever.

AXEL TO ANNA.

I will soon procure myself a situation.

ANNA TO AXEL.

Wait, therefore, until then.

AXEL TO ANNA.

As you command. I must admire your patience and prudence.

ANNA TO AXEL.

You are not angry.

AXEL TO ANNA.

Yes.

ANNA TO AXEL.

Wherefore; best Axel, wherefore?

AXEL TO ANNA.

Ah, nonsense!

ANNA TO AXEL.

Axel, you really grieve me extremely.

AXEL TO ANNA.

Do not detain yourself, young lady, by writing unmeaning words. Lieutenant Papperto might become impatient. I saw him more than half-an-hour since go up to you.

ANNA TO AXEL.

If Lieutenant Emil Papperto will make a call upon my aunt, and she will receive him, I cannot turn him out. My good Axel, be quiet!

AXEL TO ANNA.

Ah, what! Be quiet! I do not shoot myself, neither drown, hang, nor poison myself. Oh, I am quiet—quiet and calm like you; I only think what waistcoat, whether a red or a green one, would best suit the physiognomy of a fortunate wooer. I grant that Nature has not given me a red and white porcelain-face like Lieutenant Papperto, and ladies whom such a one pleases must think a brown and severe one less handsome. But fortunately there are people who can like a countenance of this kind very much. I will now go to the Mullitons; Betty Mulliton is really a most lovely girl.

ANNA TO AXEL.

I congratulate you. If you have not yet decided regarding the waistcoat, I pray you to make use of the one contained in this packet, which I have em-

broidered for you, or rather have bought for you, since every stitch has cost a second of my night's rest. I think that it will be very becoming to a brown and severe countenance. My love to Betty Mulliton!

ANNA TO AXEL.

For the love of God, Axel, what has happened? You have been bled! You are ill! I also am almost ill through uneasiness. Axel, Axel, how wild and imprudent you are!

AXEL TO ANNA.

In somewhat cooler blood, and in a somewhat quieter mood, I hasten to say to you a word which vainly in my childhood they endeavoured by cudgeling to wrest from my lips;—a word, to escape which I have in later times fought a duel, and which to pronounce at thy feet, my Anna, my angel of goodness and patience, I now yearn;—PARDON, O PARDON!

ANNA TO AXEL.

The Doctor, I hear, has forbidden conversation, and has ordered you, for several days, silence and rest. Be obedient, my best Axel, and shew in this way that you love me.

Do not think about anything unpleasant. I make myself your invisible sick-nurse. I come and seat myself upon your bed, in my white dress, and with my fair curls, just as I pleased you so much lately.

You may not look at me; I draw the green curtains.
You must sleep, and there will I sing a little cradle-song. Listen—or, rather, do not listen, but sleep!

“Young Axel is beloved by me,”
Anna sighed, and sung this ditty,
Thinking, “He is, what a pity!
Eaten up by jealousy!”

“If, as bridegroom, thus he can
Be so stern, so crooked-pated,
How, when once together mated,
Shall we act as wife and man?”

“Shall we say, all day, in strife,
‘Wicked Axel!’ ‘truthless Anna!’
Ah! ‘twixt Axel, then, and Anna,
What an enviable life!”

“Axel, thou to me art dear;
Yet, ere such a life be spending,
Let our love have speedy ending;
Trust me that far better were!”

AXEL TO ANNA.

Axel heard fair Anna's song;
Would not mar its tuneful measure;
True, to hear the song was pleasure;
Yet it was a little long.

And thus sang he: “Should I kind,
Should I gentle be for ever;
Merry jesting were I never
In my heart's warm love to find.

“Who is it, excepting thee,
Could from jealousy defend me,
Ever blessed quiet lend me?
Anna, thou must marry me!”

ANNA TO AXEL.

Anna she heard Axel's song;
How impertinently mutter'd,
Scarcely can in words be utter'd;
Hence 't will be unanswer'd long.

AXEL TO ANNA.

Not so, good Anna; not so, but as follows:

This advice pleased Anna well;
She follow'd it, as reason's plan,
Became good wife to that good man,
And, in so doing, won a deal.

ANNA TO AXEL.

Nay, as you will. Invalids one dare not contradict. Take now and then a spoonful of this apple-jelly that I have prepared for you and sent. It will do you good.

AXEL TO ANNA.

Anna, I am melancholy. The birds twitter outside my window, and build themselves nests under the roof. I must lie in bed—my only pleasure is to say rude things to the Doctor, and break his medicine bottles, which have no healing power in them.

ANNA TO AXEL.

Amuse yourself rather with reading this book that I send you; there is a deal that is good and true in it. Often when I was low spirited, and in a state of

mind in which I saw every thing black, when all the strings of my soul had become inharmonious, has the reading of a good book again tuned them, and listening to their sweet, ringing harmony, I have thought:—

Now heave the foaming billows, now they fall,
Beneath our boat upon life's stormy flood;
Let never gloomy cowardice appal;
Let us hope ever! God is wise and good!

Even if at times the tempest howleth o'er us,
And gloomy night encompass us with fear,—
One moment wait!—the tempest flies before us,
And the still, peaceful heaven smileth clear.

And green-clad shores, enriched with many a blossom,
Beckon the sailor o'er the peaceful flood;
Thither he steers with thankful throbbing bosom,
And, filled with joy, says, "God is wise, good!"

AXEL TO ANNA,

That is He, that is He, and you are an angel, Anna! But the spirit of melancholy has seized upon my soul as well as my body to-day. I think, or rather I beat my brains, now too much to be able to read. A wretched crowd of gloomy black fancies surrounds me in my solitude, like ghosts which have risen up from Tartarus. What will become of you with this penurious and severe aunt, who will not open her doors to young and respectable men? Shall you sit year after year with her, and, like her, dry up and become hollow-eyed (which would be nothing to wonder at, since you see only her), and catch her cough? What will become of me with this old uncle,

who makes me write out his memoirs and thoughts until my own become quite unclear? What, tell me, what?

ANNA TO AXEL.

Let us become whatever we may, only not unworthy and ungrateful creatures. Axel, you may never again speak of my aunt in this tone, she has her less amiable qualities, but she has also her good ones; and besides, I know, intends me so much good. Sooner than make her infirmities of age ridiculous, I would have them myself.

Your uncle, as you yourself have told me, has shewn you a deal of kindness.

AXEL TO ANNA.

Oh, they are both, without doubt, angels, true angels of light, who, however, let us sit in utter darkness. I am ill, and out of spirits.

ANNA TO AXEL.

I am so happy to-day. I have such good hopes. Whence and wherefore? Listen! I was yesterday in the church. The air was cold, the wind raged, my aunt would not let me go. I entreated and entreated, until the "No, my dear child!" changed itself into a "Nay, so go then, thou self-willed thing!" which sounded most harmoniously to my ear.

For whom I prayed most fervently in the church you will be able easily to guess. I prayed from the

most secret recesses of my heart, as confidently as a child may implore an All-good Father. As I, in deep devotion, rose up with the congregation to sing the heavenly hallelujah, a sunbeam, clear and wonderful, streamed through the church-window and illuminated Westin's glorious altar-piece. The angels of Faith, Hope, and Charity, who kneel around the grave of the already ascended One, stood forth at once so living, so supernaturally true, that it seemed as though they opened their lips and joined in our song of praise. In my heart arose powerful and inward conviction, that all will yet be well! and with indescribable emotion I bowed myself to receive for us both the solemn blessing. Axel, all will yet be well!

AXEL TO ANNA.

On your account, my Anna, sweet angel, and through you, shall I become blest.

I also to-day have in my soul only joyful feelings, lovely hopes, old, good, and to me most heartily welcome acquaintance. I was up and sate at the window; I have tasted your excellent apple-jelly, and saw how the clear March sun melted the icicles which the cold night had laid upon our neighbour's copper roof. Upon this, I philosophised somewhat in this strain: as the light and warmth of heaven make the ice-veil of night to disappear, will also from thence the rays of a better fortune break through the powerful frost-mist which dims the perspective of our happiness. I gazed

so long and so full of presentiment at the sun's activity, until I at length fancied I saw clearly one of the figures which the victorious, piercing sunbeams formed in their resisting ice, the ridge and form of my own nose. Somewhat farther on, close to the side of the chimney, I recognised with delight the form of your white, softly rounded forehead, which seemed modestly desirous of withdrawing itself from the kisses of the sun. O Anna! I must shew you one of these days how lovely this looked,—I must represent the sun.

ANNA TO AXEL.

I assure you that I am not at all curious. You have then got up! How I rejoice about it! The most unpleasant thing may happen to me to-day (if it only does not concern you), and I shall laugh at it.

AXEL TO ANNA.

Ha, ha, ha, ha! Do you know at what I laugh? At myself, my angel. I have such good hopes and presentiments, that I should find it quite natural if now a good friend should suddenly step in, and say to me—"Axel, thou art become an excessively rich man." I believe also, that I should not be astonished if suddenly little Cupids should sail in at the window, bringing a poor lover a talisman, by which he could command all the gifts of fortune; neither should I open my mouth very wide, if suddenly the ceiling of my room were to open, in order to let a shower of

gold stream in! Every thing seems to me possible to-day, nothing would surprise me. I have opened my door and window to welcome my visitors; and whilst I wander smiling up and down my chamber, I now and then cast a glance up towards the ceiling.

AXEL TO ANNA.

Curs—— draught! I beg pardon; but I am in a very bad humour. I have been obliged to close doors and windows. I became numb and stiff in all my limbs from this cold and draught. No one came. And instead of raising my looks towards the ceiling have carefully examined the floor; so that after a careful examination I can assure you that he who laid it down must have been an arch bungler, for not one deal is like another, either in height or width. I must now go out and breathe the fresh air. I am in health, and will be in health. My uncle and doctor may say what they will.

AXEL TO ANNA.

Anna, Anna! my Anna, my Anna! good Anna, excellent Anna, angel Anna! Anna, my Anna, my bride, my wife, sing, spring, shout Victoria!

ANNA TO AXEL.

Axel, Axel, incomprehensible Axel! what is the matter with thee? What has happened?

AXEL TO ANNA.

I have an office—I have an office! He came, the excellent friend through the door,—the angel from heaven. I had almost knocked him down as I went out. O what a friend! He it is who has resigned to me the situation with its accompanying salary, which has been offered to him, because he had no need of it. He is rich, he has made me also rich. Oh, shew me a mortal who is happier than I! A lover whose—yet still perhaps—if he were already married. But that also in a short time I will become—if you will, my Anna—Anna!

ANNA TO AXEL.

Good Axel, is it possible? Is it then really true? I can scarcely believe it—I cannot take it in. Axel, my dear friend, shall we really become happy?

AXEL TO ANNA.

We shall. My whole life shall be consecrated to your happiness; and your happiness will always, as now, be mine. We can now marry when it is agreeable to us. I have a respectable situation; the salary is certainly not large, but our wants will be small. The comfortable things of life are mostly only for old people, who are no longer able to enjoy the happiness of the heart,—when one can no longer love and be beloved. Nay, why then it may, perhaps, be the best to sleep and dream on a soft couch, that one

is happy. We, my Anna, who may pluck in the May of life its most beautiful flowers, we will waking enjoy our felicity, and be happy, even were we poor; yes, even were we obliged to do without every thing. Do you remember with what emotion we once read near Medevi, of that married pair, who, after living together five-and-twenty years, felt themselves so unspeakably happy? O my Anna, do you yet remember this?

ANNA TO AXEL.

In truth, my best Axel——no.

AXEL TO ANNA.

Accompanied by a friend, Mr. L—— and his wife wandered through a wood. Here they encountered some gipsies, who were in great misery. L——'s friend pitied these poor creatures, who are exposed to all the physical calamities of nature. "Well," said Mr. L——, "if in order to pass my life with her (his wife), I must have subjected myself to a condition such as this, I would have gone about begging these thirty years—and we should still have been very happy!"

"Ah, yes!" cried his wife; "even *then* we should have been the happiest of human beings."

What words, my Anna, what words! They were spoken under England's heaven. Let us become worthy to speak them, one day, under Sweden's heaven.

ANNA TO AXEL.

For heaven's sake, best Axel. You do not mean? I do not rightly understand at what you aim. Yet I must confess to you, that to me, suffering, hunger, shivering, and begging, appear less attractive. What do you really mean? A gipsy I will never become; that I tell you, were it only on account of the frightful complexion.

AXEL TO ANNA.

That is not necessary. Nothing shall prevent my wife being white, as well in her complexion as her clothes.

O my beloved Anna, do not overthrow my temple of happiness with your cold, calculating, worldly, and trifling spirit. Let us become happy, not for others, but for ourselves. If you desire this, we certainly can. My salary certainly is small, as I have already said—a nothing in comparison to that which I should wish to offer you. Three hundred dollars is our yearly income. That is truly little, very little; but your prudent housekeeping, my economy and order, will make every penny a dollar. A man requires really so little, only to live—life is really so short. Who has not much, has not much to care about.

With but little ballast, the jolly-boat sails so lightly and merrily on, now over rising, and now over sinking waves. Let us courageously step in;

—the wind is favourable—the shores adorned with flowers—the heaven free from clouds—and before us wanders the mild star of love, which lights us as far as the haven. I am now too much excited; later, I will unfold to you my plans.

ANNA TO AXEL.

My good Axel, zephyrs seldom blow on the ocean of life—there very wild storms toss about. I fear very much that, at the first gust of wind, the jolly-boat, without ballast, might be upset.

AXEL TO ANNA.

If one is fearful and cowardly—yes,—if one loses one's equilibrium in the slightest gust of wind. But away with similes! They only confuse; I will dash straight into the affair.

I possess (as you know) a small farm near the city. This is small, quite small, and scarcely worth three hundred dollars, but still one could live very well there. A roof over their heads was all that our forefathers desired when they built their huts. And what a hardy, glorious people were they! We are less, and we have more. Two rooms and a kitchen has our little temple of happiness, a blooming potatoe-field surrounds it, and a garden, where the most beautiful fruit-trees and the most lovely flowers can come forth, changes the whole place into a real para-

dise. A little hen-house. Anna, I will not pardon you, if you should laugh.

ANNA TO AXEL.

I truly do not laugh, my best Axel.

AXEL TO ANNA.

A little hen-house, I would say, stands close by, and its pretty inhabitants will afford us profit and pleasure.

With regard to the fitting up of the interior—away with the luxury and cursed superfluity which has made my fatherland poor! Away with the false ideas of what is becoming, proper, respectable; despicable prejudices which only repeat, one should do as others do, away with you! To you I turn, simple manners, honour of the olden time. Temperance and contentment, the doctrine of our forefathers, be welcome and rule in my quiet house. A wooden bench appears soft when one is seated upon it at the beloved one's side; a bowl of milk, one simple dish placed by your hand upon the table, at which a friend, a friend who knows how to prize what is offered by sincere hearts, will not refuse to take his place—O what a meal! Kings, emperors, invite me into your golden halls! Proud and disdainfully will Anna's happy husband answer, No. O my sweet Anna, how quickly, how joyously, must our days pass away in this little earthly paradise! Hand in hand we wander through life,

and die at length so sweetly in each other's arms! But pardon, I will not distress you—do not weep, my Anna!

ANNA TO AXEL.

I will certainly not weep, my best Axel!

AXEL TO ANNA.

Our clothes shall be simple, like our food, like our whole life. You must be always clothed in *white*, for then you are like an angel. The garden I attend to myself, dig, weed, plant, and water, with your assistance, on the days I am not occupied in the city. In the house, disposes and commands, with absolute sway, my ever industrious and circumspect little wife. When I return from my labour in the fields, or out of the city, your harp and your voice will transport me into heaven, or we eat together a simple meal which is savoured by our appetite and gaiety. For the evenings, when the great world with yawns seeks for pleasure where it never yet was found, at suppers, where one goes through a course of moral hungering, or at balls, where one dances as though for wages—in the evenings we read together, Tegnér's poems, Cooper's and Walter Scott's romances, and enjoy, whilst we ennoble our hearts, all the pleasure which genius can afford the soul and the heart. We must not neglect the theatre; in order to see Almlóf plays, we must rather neglect eating and drinking. Thus

we are very often there. But you must have a maid-servant, that is true, for you must not burn your face and hands at the hearth. Besides, when I am at home, you must be always near me. O Anna, say, shall we not be unspeakably happy?

ANNA TO AXEL.

I hope so, certainly, my dear friend; but whether precisely in the manner which you have imagined to yourself I know not, I fear that you are precisely the one who is not fitted for such a simple shepherd's life; besides, this is put together in a strange enough manner. Do you yet know, what you once told me, how much pocket-money your uncle gave you yearly?

AXEL TO ANNA.

The dev—— (I do not curse). I now remember. Full three hundred dollars—exactly as much as my future salary amounts to,—and this was, by the end of the year, entirely gone. But, angel Anna, when I am once married, you shall see something quite different; then I will become supernaturally economical; I will look at every heller.

ANNA TO AXEL.

Very pleasant for your wife! Willingly, best Axel, will I also look at every heller, and be as economical as possible; but with all this, I fear that, if we follow your plans, we shall become ever and ever

more like the gipsy pair. Have you considered that you drink three cups of coffee every morning? And when you were with us one evening, I saw that to three cups of tea you did not despise quite a profuse supply of tea-bread and rusks.

AXEL TO ANNA.

From this day forth, I will eat oatmeal-soup every morning and every evening, drink egg-beer, and soak brown bread in it, if you think the other too dear. You are right. Besides, as a patriot, one must renounce all articles which are not brought forth from the earth of our fatherland.

Agreed, Anna; we eat for a year, from this month forth, every morning, a dish of oatmeal-soup—every evening a cup of egg-beer, in our own little paradise. Besides, this is far more advantageous for the complexion and health than all the cursed tea and coffee drinking. And should it taste even like Peruvian-bark and rhubarb—

When Hebe Anna fills the cup,
Axel, as nectar, will drink it up.

ANNA TO AXEL.

Oatmeal-soup I can only get down with trouble; and egg-beer is, once for all, very disagreeable to me.

AXEL TO ANNA.

Who fears to share with me a dish of oatmeal-soup

AXEL TO ANNA.

My angel, good Anna, you shall never either eat or do the least possible thing for which you have not a decided inclination. I should deserve to be condemned to bread and water, if I desired anything else. Do you see, heavenly maiden, that it was not after all, such pure earnest with the wooden bench, the single dish, and the one servant-maid. I have, do you see, speculated upon my uncle. He will certainly for decency's sake, when we help ourselves so excellently, assist us a little. My uncle is very far from being hard-hearted, and besides he is very fond of me, that I know.

ANNA TO AXEL.

My aunt is also sometimes very good, and loves me tenderly in her way I know; she has given me many proofs of this. Possibly she would also do something for us.

AXEL TO ANNA.

Anna, we will speak with our dear relatives,—shall we not? We will tell them every thing. Should they say no—Anna, I have your word,—you are already mine before God—and mine you remain, men will not separate us! Yet we must endeavour to move human beings to be human.

ANNA TO AXEL.

Yes, Axel, let us endeavour to soften the hearts of those against whose wishes and commands we neither may nor should act. Yes, let us try this.

AXEL TO ANNA.

Well, to-morrow !

ANNA TO AXEL.

To-morrow !

AXEL TO ANNA.

[A day later.]

My dear uncle is somewhat cross this morning. The coffee was cold, and the news in the papers was not according to his mind. "The rulers behave stupidly," said he. "I shall take care not to do the same, I must still wait some hours."

ANNA TO AXEL.

My dear aunt is also in an ill-humour. She has mislaid a piece of money, and broken a bottle of rose-water; but one would believe *I* had done it. Before three hours, at least, I dare say nothing.

AXEL TO ANNA.

The whole forenoon my uncle has thundered politics. Russia and the whole Ottoman empire have alternately come upon the carpet. I have listened

with the most unwearying patience, and said, "Yes," "No," "all the better, dear uncle," or, "all the worse, dear uncle," just as was in accordance with the old man's ideas. What did this help? He became ever more and more jealous; he turned towards me, seemed to perceive in my person a representative of the Turkish empire, fell in a rage, so that I, in order not to receive blows, like the Sublime Porte, was obliged, in all haste, to make my retreat through the door. I am quite vexed about the lost forenoon.

ANNA TO AXEL.

Five times this forenoon have I opened my mouth to begin my little speech, and five times have I again closed it. To have prayed for anything would certainly have been fruitless. For my aunt sitting there in the corner of her sofa, with closely pressed together lips and severe looks, appeared a living, No! But this afternoon!

AXEL TO ANNA.

The old man is now fast, he shall not again escape. He is taking his afternoon nap. I will take great care that he neither goes out, nor that any one comes in to him, before I have been able to say: "I love Anna; I must have her for my wife, or die!"

ANNA TO AXEL.

Axel, how my heart beats! My aunt also is taking

her afternoon rest! When she wakes I will speak with her. If she is only not too soon wakened for them, her temper is not good—still Manette! Do not mew so, there is the cream for my coffee; lap and be quiet. Ah! there buzzes a big fly—it will seat itself, perhaps, upon her nose—no—my good angel, send it away! Good, she sleeps quietly. But yet she will wake some time—and I shall speak. I tremble whilst I write.

Axel, how my heart beats! I hear it throb! It is painful! Art thou also in the same state of mind, Axel?

AXEL TO ANNA.

My heart beats, certainly, quicker and more powerfully than the pendulum of a clock; but I wish, did it pain me ever so much, that it would beat as roughly as a coppersmith's hammer, so that my excellent uncle, who entirely and wholly to pain and annoy me keeps sleeping on, might be awakened by it. Nothing is so unbearable as to wait, to live in uncertainty—to hold oneself ready. I have coughed, sung, made a noise before his door,—all in vain! As often as I listened, I have had the vexation of hearing him snore. Had he not locked himself in, one could have entered easily, blundered over the sofa, or found out some other polite manner of waking the sleeper. But now it is enough to drive one mad. I have the

desire to set my curtains on fire, only to bring the fire drum past his windows.

ANNA TO AXEL.

Do not be nonsensical, Axel, commit no folly. My aunt sleeps also, or pretends to do so; for as often as I have gone over to her and have looked at her, I have seen her opened eyes hastily close themselves. Most certainly she has remarked that I await her waking to say something to her. Does thy uncle still sleep?

AXEL TO ANNA.

Ever and eternally. His long deep breathing draws away the air from me at the same time; it is just as though I found myself in a cellar-vault. Does thy aunt still pretend to be sleeping?

ANNA TO AXEL.

Still. What shall I do?

AXEL TO ANNA.

Vexation! Now he has awoke, and has stolen forth like a mouse which is afraid of the cat. I heard a slight rustle at his door. When I rushed out to see what this was, I heard, quite down below on the stairs, a clip-clap of galosches, which in all haste hurried out of the door. I ran after him, and cried,

"Uncle! uncle! I have something to say to you!"
 "To-morrow is also a day!" he answered, without
 looking back. I am in despair. He has remarked
 something.

ANNA TO AXEL.

Ah, Axel! my aunt has feigned sleep until now.
 It is now late in the evening, the worst time of the
 day to make confessions to her. Let it then remain
 as thy uncle said, "To-morrow!" Ah, it seems to
 me as though I had gained something by this delay.

AXEL TO ANNA.

A day of fruitless, painful waiting,—a sleepless
 night. See, this is my whole gain! But to-morrow!

AXEL TO ANNA.

[*At midnight.*]

I cannot sleep. Anna, I have dark forebodings—
 the morrow will bring us no good. I have now no
 inconsiderable sum of money in my hands. I have
 sold something. But, however, what has that to do
 with the affair? Anna, would it—if our—but it will
 be best to speak about this when fate has decided.

I believe, my best Anna, the midnight hour shews
 me ghosts. Anna, I feel deeply, that if you do not
 wander by my side, my whole life will be only a
 ghost,—that is, a horrible nothing!

*

*

*

*

The clock strikes one, Anna. This stroke is our symbol—we also are only one. In the morning hour of life we have united ourselves,—I know that nothing can separate us. Wherefore, then, do I write so seriously? Wherefore am I in such a gloomy mood?

* * * *

How slowly pass away the hours of the night! Thinking of you, and writing to you, I endeavour to give wings to the minutes. Now, when every thing around me is so still and peaceful, I hear all the more distinctly the storm within me—I cannot conceive how all can be so still, so silent, so dead. Is not this the world—are not human beings here—do not passions wake in their bosoms? Do I live solitary, and have all the spirits of disquiet which fled from reposing hearts assembled themselves in my breast? My gentle Anna, I feel it is a stormy ocean into which your gentle soul will discharge itself. But then will all attain rest!

* * * *

I have sought after peace—in vain. Separated from you, I shall find it no more. The winged throbbing of the heart—and every throb a sentiment—how the minutes stretch themselves out into eternity! And every thing around me is so peaceful. Listen! the town-clock strikes two—will nothing then awake? Will no pain, no love, no yearning, raise its voice through the night? All is still—I alone

wake—yet there calls the watchman; but how carelessly he announces to the world that the judgment comes!

* * * *

It is morning. The world awakes—I am no longer so solitary. It is day also in my soul,—I am peaceful. The hour is here. It means—now!

ANNA TO AXEL.

I have received what you have written to me last night. Axel, could you believe that you alone were awake? Did you not hear the beating of my heart? O how extraordinary, that a mixture of wood, moss, and lime, which is for you a floor and for me a ceiling, should prevent two human hearts from understanding each other! Ah, were this *now* only somewhat farther off—I tremble!

AXEL TO ANNA.

Still I have hope, beloved, adored Anna; still nothing is lost. This morning, whilst my uncle drank his coffee, I took courage, prayed to God; thought, Anna! drew breath, and went in to him. “My best uncle!” I commenced quietly and solemnly—“My best nephew,” answered he, “what shall ‘my best uncle’ do?” “Your goodness—” “Now, what then—my goodness?” “I wish—I have.”—“I wish—I have—nay that was really excellent!” (The old man has always had an extremely unpleasant manner

of repeating my words, and then they always sound as stupid again). "Dear uncle—I am in love!" "In love? Yes, that I have easily remarked in the jaundiced complexion which thou hast had this half-year past—this is the colour of love." "My uncle, the weal or woe of my whole life depends upon one single word. O my best uncle, who——" Now came a man, whom I wished at the witch's mountain, with the papers into the room. "My son," said my uncle, "come again in a few hours—then we can speak farther with each other. Now I must see how affairs stand between Turkey and Russia." I was precisely not in the mood to wait. I took the papers, stuck them in my pocket, and said in a firm tone, "First, uncle, you must hear me." He stuck his fingers in his ears, fixed his eyes upon me like two claws, and cried, "Not one word, not a breath! Give me the papers this moment, or I will never listen to thee again." I cried, and cried again still louder. At length I must, like a little west-wind, give way to the storm of the north. My uncle became again kind, and I went my way; for he would neither have heard nor understood me, as he had fixed his eyes upon his dear papers. An hour will soon have past; yet another, and then I go. O my Anna, my only one!

AXEL TO ANNA.

Turks and Russians, Russians and Turks, what are they and their interests to me?—Straw—paper—

cuttings; and on their account must I sit here, as in a fiery furnace. Ah!—now, Anna!

AXEL TO ANNA.

It is past!—All is lost—not a spark of hope remains—I cannot see what I write.

ANNA TO AXEL.

And for me also—I received a round No—and in such hard terms! O Axel! now I feel for the first time how unspeakably I love you!

AXEL TO ANNA.

To humble me! To threaten me! “Ridiculous—nonsensical!” To threaten to turn me out of doors—me—yes, people don’t know me!

ANNA TO AXEL.

My aunt will marry me in a short time—but not to you. “This man,” said she, “has his own house, his own equipage, and is besides a respectable man.”—I was forced to laugh, Axel. I have said to her—thou, or no one!

AXEL TO ANNA.

Anna, let us fly! Let us escape from these tyrants who will murder our happiness! The earth is large, a little corner upon it can certainly be found for us. All human beings are not barbarians. You are mine. I conjure you, I command you, to follow me. To-morrow, more about this. Hold yourself ready. My determination is irresistible. We fly!

ANNA TO AXEL.

Axel, no! This would be wrong. Axel, reflect. Axel, my friend, my beloved, calm yourself, for my sake!

AXEL TO ANNA.

Place yourself this evening, between ten and eleven, at the door which leads into the neighbouring lane. Be quiet. All is ready, I have money. You are under my protection; you go with me; your duty is only to follow me. Between ten and eleven.

ANNA TO AXEL.

No, Axel! It is wrong, it is unwise. We sin against the laws of God and man in order to plunge ourselves in misery. I love you above every thing; but I need not, and will not, follow you when you do not remain upon the good and right path. And were there no other obstacle, this is sufficient for me. My aunt is sickly and old, she has only me. I will not leave her thus. Axel, come to reflection—I pray, I beseech you!

AXEL TO ANNA.

It is then you, you who will not—who refuse, who break—you, whom I believed mine! Anna, Anna, will you deceive me or yourself? That rich, that estimable man—is it not on his account that you despise me and my poverty? Is he not at this

moment with you — he — this man — this detested Emil? Answer, Anna!

ANNA TO AXEL.

I cannot answer to such a question. Axel, I love, I pity you. Axel, be the man who is worthy to be every thing to a woman. Be strong for her sake, be pure in thoughts as in wishes. O Axel, my only, my beloved friend, be my support, be a model to me in this difficult hour. Set me an example of submission, not to a stern and blind fate, but to the ordination of an All-wise Father, under whose support we always wander, let things be calm or desperate as they may. Have patience; we are yet indeed so young; let us wait; let us be patient; every thing may yet turn to good.

AXEL TO ANNA.

You are very calm, very discreet, very patient, quite satisfied. I understand you—Anna, Anna!

ANNA TO AXEL.

What shall I say to calm you, to make you satisfied? I love you indescribably, Axel; but for that very reason will I be worthy of you. Does a woman, indeed, ever preserve the esteem of a lover, who submits blindly to his passion.

Imagine, Axel, that you are some years older than you are (that can appear natural enough when one

is unhappy and in suffering, the minutes are then long, and bring experiences as if they were years); imagine that I am your daughter, what would you now say to me? Would you not speak to me admonishingly. Destroy not for the petty felicity of one moment the whole life's happiness of yourself and your friend. Be calm, wait for the time, that is often the only thing, and the most prudent thing, which a person can do. He whom you love so inwardly, so inexpressibly, will sometime do justice to her who would rather suffer for him, through him, than pollute a heart which is consecrated to him and virtue, by an impure thought, an action—a crime against duty.

ANNA TO AXEL.

Not a word from you? My Axel! can you really be dissatisfied with me? Yes, Axel, I am calm—because I am resigned,—but happy? ah, that is past!

Will you not say one kind word to me? I need it so much.

ANNA TO AXEL.

Axel, Axel, what wild demons must now be raging in your soul! Axel, pray! Do you know at whose word the agitated waves of the sea became calm? "And it was still." Pray to Him!

ANNA TO AXEL.

O heavens! I am uneasy beyond all description!

Axel, could I only see you for a few minutes! How unhappy you must be! Axel, how culpable you are if you despair, if you for one moment could forget, would forget, that Anna loves you.

ANNA TO AXEL.

Do you know, Axel, what a woman's love means? Do you know that which she says in the words—*I love thee*? Listen, Axel! Your life is mine; your virtue, my honour; your sorrow, your joy, are mine; your strength, my support; your courage, my hope,—but your fall, your disgrace—my death!

ANNA TO AXEL.

Axel—Axel—I know it, you have not come home for three nights. I have listened; your foot during these has never trodden that chamber. I saw you yesterday evening from the window; your look was wild; your whole being disturbed, your gait uncertain. Where do you go, Axel? O do not turn from me! Only upon the path of duty and of patience can you find Anna. Axel, Axel, turn back!

ANNA TO AXEL.

Axel, turn back! I cannot, I will not lose you! Listen to me! See, I weep, the tears wet the paper; see these tears—they dim my eyes,—my Axel, turn back!

ANNA TO AXEL.

I will cast no reproaches on you,—fear not one word, which you would not hear, not one look which you would not wish to see. I am really your friend, your bride—shall be perhaps sometime your wife—Axel, think on that—sometime your wife!

AXEL TO ANNA.

Never—never—never!

ANNA TO AXEL.

On your breast will I lean and pray—for my sake—forgive yourself! Let you have done whatever you may—my Axel—I still love you! Yours I am, yours I remain to be!

AXEL TO ANNA.

Never—never more! I am unworthy of you, Anna! I have forgotten—forgotten all,—you—myself—God! I have *gambled*!—Ha, the tempter, the treacherous friend! I have lost every thing which I possess,—still more than I possess—the property of others. I must fly my country. Do not lean on my breast—a hell is there,—do not seize my hand—it is bloody. Farewell! Die, poor maiden, if you can. I—cannot die!

AXEL TO ANNA.

I had hardened myself against all your love, against

all your tenderness,—had left your letters unopened. Now I have opened them—in order to allow some fire-drops yet to run on the burning glow of my despair,—in order, if possible, to become insane. It became otherwise;—now the loving words throng beneficially about my soul, like the evening dew upon the hard parched earth.

Anna, you shall not despair on my account—I myself will not despair. I have erred grievously—I will suffer, and be reconciled. What caused my error? I know not—despair—jealousy—hell!

AXEL TO ANNA.

You will not say a word to me! But, indeed, am I worthy of it? Can, indeed, the pure angel of heaven speak to the son of crime?

To-morrow evening I shall set off. A letter will inform my uncle of every thing. He will not refuse his forgiveness to his unhappy nephew who has fled his country. *Forgiveness!*—that is the highest for which I can now hope. *Forgiveness!* what a word;—how blessed, to those who are forgiven! I beseech my uncle to disinherit me, and thereby to pay my debts. I fear that he will not do the latter. Anna—in my madness I borrowed a considerable sum from a friend, who is not rich, and has a wife and several little children. He loved me, he trusted me, he gave me all which he possessed; I deceived him—I gambled away his little children's clothes and food.

Now, would that I could pay him with my blood!
Remorse, thou who with tiger-claws rendest my heart,
what good do'st thou do him ——?

AXEL TO ANNA.

I have erred grievously — have deserved heavy punishment. I will accuse myself before you—I must do it. I knew that I sinned, and sinned nevertheless. It is past, peace is gone—the time is gone when I knew not remorse. In my rage for my losses, I challenged my fortunate opponent. I wounded him dangerously —almost mortally. He was carried home to his mother—to his old mother! He was her darling—her only child,—perhaps she may die,—well for her!

ANNA TO AXEL.

Axel, pray! Let us pray!

AXEL TO ANNA.

I cannot—cannot *now*. I see him — them — the hungry little ones—their deceived father. O what am I become!

Now I am rather better. Pray for me, Anna! I believe in the power of intercession. I am not worthy to pray. You are pure and good.

This next night I shall set off! I shall go towards Germany—towards North Germany. I shall offer myself for a situation; something may turn up for me to do.

AXEL TO ANNA.

My eyes burn—sleep flies them—that is no wonder. If I could only weep! but that is too good for me. I have something upon my heart which burdens, which gnaws it—that is the pang of conscience. Anna, if you would lay your hand upon my breast—but am I really worthy to have this alleviation.

ANNA TO AXEL.

Here, Axel, take these opium-drops, they will give you rest and sleep. Anna prays for you; Anna weeps for you; Anna loves you.

AXEL TO ANNA.

I have also a little sister—a suffering child—my father prayed me, upon his deathbed, to take care of her. I add her address; when you can go to her—tell her, that her poor brother—tell her, that he is dead. The ring which I enclose will, if it be sold, suffice for some months to pay for her board. When I can, I will send her more, but through you. Thanks, affectionate, good angel, for that which you have sent up. To-night—in a few hours—I shall set off—away from you!

AXEL TO ANNA.

In two hours I shall set off. Clothes which I have sold have obtained money for my journey.

Anna, you have been my guardian-angel. I also have now been able to pray,—I am quiet, resigned—I will suffer and conciliate; I will again have hopes of myself. You have not given me up, God will forgive me. I will live, that I may become worthy of this.

I must now take leave of you—of you, that is to say, of happiness—and of every thing which makes life dear to me. But it is all my own fault. In this solemn moment, when I am about to take a long, perhaps an eternal farewell of you, I will lay open my whole soul before you. What I say to you is the truth, it will be a comfort to you, and will preserve your peace at a time when Axel will be so far removed from you.

I believe on God, the Merciful, All-wise, and Omnipresent. I am a Christian, according to my belief; that my future actions may testify to this belief, let us both pray—to Him who gives the power!

I believe that you, my Anna, love me,—and that, wherever my restless existence may be cast upon the earth, one heart will feel with me, one thought will follow me. The sweet consciousness of the steady presence of an angel!

This firm belief will sustainingly unite itself in my heart with the remembrance of my transgression—my crimes—will steel it against temptations, and will form out of me that improved person whom Anna could love.

AXEL TO ANNA.

[*Half an hour later.*

I have not yet besought you to forgive me, and yet have done you so much wrong. Axel, weak and violent, was not worthy of you, Anna. Pardon him, however; in *one thing* he was strong—in his love—and this will endure in his breast to his last breath. Forgive him all your tears—see, mine flow,—welcome, you companions of misfortune, bathe her feet! Tears of repentance, of love, of pain, and of joy—flow, flow; that which ye can win, is forgiveness!

Your lock of hair—may I keep it? I will bear it upon my heart; and a stranger, wandering solitarily about the world, I shall still have something with me that will speak to me of the angel who was mine.

Was mine—is mine no longer! I have still one word to say—my last word—ah, a heavy word! Anna, you are free! I have no longer a right over your hand.

Axel's honour is stained, Anna is free! I return your ring.

Now all is at an end!

[*Eleven o'clock.*

The hour is come. I have stood at the window and contemplated the heavens. The stars sparkle brightly—brightly as on that evening,—you still remember it? when we exchanged rings, looked up to heaven, and were blessed as angels. The evening

star shone then upon us mildly and clearly. Now and then, Anna, when mournful memories of departed hours may not be unwelcome to you, then glance upward to this star, and think on Axel. Often in lonely nights will his glance in joy and sorrow be riveted upon it.

The minutes speed on. God bless you, my Anna, may his angels defend thee!

Sweden shall, please God, one day see again a worthier son.

O my country! may I in the bosom of thy earth, which bore my cradle, find my grave, which Anna will wet with a tear.

My youth, my joy, my country, my Anna—ah! all, all—farewell!

ANNA TO AXEL.

Axel, best Axel, do not set off to-night! Do not set off to-night, upon my knees I pray this from you. Remain yet one day,—on the following night you may set off, if in the mean time things do not change—I—ah, I dare not give you hopes, which may be easily deceived; but perhaps, O Axel, perhaps we may find means to pay your debts. Delay only this one day, Anna prays you.

AXEL TO ANNA.

Why delay?—that for which you hope is an impossibility,—ah, you know not what it is to delay when

every thing so—it is as if in the death-struggle one would defer the end. And why? for an impossibility! Yet once more these painful feelings—yet once more to take leave!! But you wish it!

AXEL TO ANNA.

Why do you not write? The hours creep on so slowly. I suffer grievously, but the thought that you have willed it does me good.

AXEL TO ANNA.

Not a word from you! What can it mean? It is already evening—a portentous and stormy evening—Anna, in my heart it is still more portentous. Write a pacifying word to me.

AXEL TO ANNA.

My soul is so unhappy—so irritable,—I have suffered so much, I suffer still infinitely. All wild tormenting spirits are still so near to me; O fear to provoke them! Anna, say one word to me!

AXEL TO ANNA.

And yet I *will*, I *must*, seek for peace with you. You cannot deceive me. Yes, I feel it,—you might murder me—I would kiss the dagger and still believe on you.

AXEL TO ANNA.

Lieutenant Papperto is with you! How can he go so often, when I find it impossible to obtain an entrance—and at the same time so late? Why is he with you? Is it he who will pay my debts; or, perhaps you and he together? I am really extremely affected!

AXEL TO ANNA.

Anna, I confide in you—yes, I confide in you,—although—but I am unhappy, in despair,—tell me what you do, what you wish?

AXEL TO ANNA.

I have been told, that Lieutenant Papperto has resigned in your favour a considerable property which had been left to you in common by a near relation—a relation, heaven knows who it was; for my part, God himself be with us! I have been told that you embraced Lieutenant Papperto—in his arms, on his bosom, have wept. I have been told that you are betrothed. A busy friend has hastened to gladden me with these tidings. Is it true, Anna? Death and the devil, is it true?

AXEL TO ANNA.

Anna, if you are thus—if you have thus forsaken me—yourself—what will become of me, Anna? In whom shall I still believe?

AXEL TO ANNA.

Your silence is an answer. Then it is true. Ha, woman, woman! Snake, monster! O where can I find the true expression? Where can I get words to describe my feelings? Detestable payment of my debts! Payment with the selling of a soul. Ha, ha, ha, ha!—Do you understand me? I write down my laughter—ha, ha, ha! Thus I shall set off on my journey, rich in sad experience. It is now night—the hour is come—hurrah! Welcome storm-wind, which salutes my forehead as a brother, and dances upon my nocturnal way. Yes, nocturnal, nocturnal! Farewell, Anna, I leave you my cur——. I pity you!

ANNA TO AXEL.

Axel, Axel, stay! Ah, forgive! I could not write earlier. The brightest light suddenly in the deepest darkness—that would be too much—I could not bear it. Emil is a noble man—I have embraced him—but for your sake. I can now no more. I am thine, Axel, thine!

ANNA TO AXEL.

I am very ill. Oh, I never thought that happiness could be so oppressive—I am not able to bear it. Axel, we are rich! Lieutenant Papperto will unite us, will move our relations. L——, whom you wounded, will not die. Your debts will be paid,—all

will be good. Poor Axel, how I have pitied you! Forgive me all your disquiet, your despair. I was not in a state to give you an explanation, such as you ought to have had, and as you desired.

ANNA TO AXEL.

[A day later.

My illness increases, but I am perfectly conscious. I draw together my bed-curtains, say that I will sleep, but write to you. I fear, however, that it will be illegible. If I die, then I can and will leave my property to you. With one part of it, pay your debts; with the rest, seek to make yourself, and others, happy; but never play, Axel, never more!

ANNA TO AXEL.

[A day later.

Prepare yourself for all, my friend; I have, perhaps, only one day longer to live. Axel, do not give yourself up to despair. I will never leave you. You will not wander lonesome through the world, whether you meet with joy or sorrow; your Anna will invisibly attend you, true as when she yet wore your ring, as a child of heaven, still the bride of her Axel. Ought, indeed, two souls, which have once found each other, ever to become separated by anything? Should two flames, which have united, part and burn each for itself? O no! my spirit will float around you—be near to you—attend you ever. You will

feel it near to you, delicious as a breath of spring, or as the fragrance of flowers—or as a caress, a kiss, pure and gentle as a moonbeam. When you feel yourself good, strong; or when you feel yourself happy, consoled, or full of hope, or only calm,—then think that your Anna is near you.

ANNA TO AXEL.

Now, for the first time, now I understand that glorious apparition which so affected me. The angels of faith, of love, and of hope, beside a grave, illumined by the glorious sun of God. It has reference to you, my Axel. From the quiet grave, where Anna will soon repose, will these three shew you the way home, where she awaits you.

ANNA TO AXEL.

My consciousness begins to be confused. Yet a few words to you, my Axel, although I do not know whether I have not already written them. My property I have left to you. I could do so according to law and right. With one part thereof, you must pay your debts —

My Axel, do not gamble again. With the remainder, you must make yourself and others happy. If you marry, be a good husband.

Not violent —

Not jealous —

Not a gambler —

A wife suffers much from these failings. It is wrong and cruel to distress her who looks for her entire happiness from you.

Be good to the poor.

Be unjust to no one. Fight no duel.

Blood demands blood. Fear God.

Think on Anna!

AXEL TO ANNA.

That which I shall now do I tell you beforehand, that you may be prepared for it, and not be shocked. I shall come down to you—knock down the drawing-room door—knock down all the doors, if they are locked—knock everybody down, or dead, who will keep me back—go in, and seat myself near you, that I may, with the strength of a despair which will compel fate to my side and conquer death itself, retain your angel soul in your angel body. I follow these lines.

AXEL TO ANNA.

[Three days later.]

I came to you, Anna, wild, in nameless despair—saw you—was calm, and learned to pray. I saw you almost about to leave me, and to depart to a better home, which is so well known to you, but from which I was excluded,—and was able again to pray. You are again given to me—to earth and to me. And now, angel of heaven, teach me to pray—and to give thanks.

AXEL TO ANNA.

[*A day later.*

They will not allow me to be with you; you require rest, they say. Yes, my Anna, I confess that my nature has no resemblance to the west wind; but it shall ever more and more acquire it. Your last letter, my Anna, shall always rest on my heart; like a talisman, it shall there operate against all that is evil, and for all that is good. I have embraced Emil as my benefactor and friend. We have been together to-day, to L——, my opponent, and the sacrifice of my fury. He is out of all danger. I turned myself to his mother with the difficult word *pardon* (which, alas, is now become customary to me), and, with a shake of the hand, L—— and I have promised never to play again.

AXEL TO ANNA.

Through the care of the noble-minded Emil are my debts already paid. Oh, I am not worthy of my happiness! It weighs upon me,—it almost weighs me down. If I for one year were a Trappist, were to wear a hair shirt, were to scourge myself a little every day, to lie upon nails, to go about silently and with eyes cast down, not to see the sun, and to dig my own grave,—then I fancy I should gain a little more courage to become happy.

I said this also in the fulness of my heart to Emil.

He laughed, and asked whether, as the beginning of my designed penance, I would not impose upon myself the not seeing Anna again for a month's time. It would be just as good to bury me at once! Anna, you are my life, my all. The austerity of the Trappist life is nothing, all physical martyrdom is mere child's play; but not to see you—see, that is martyrdom, that is death!

AXEL TO ANNA.

I would that I could with my breath suck up the time, and thereby bring on the quicker the moment when I may again see you; and yet I enjoy drop by drop this time, of which every minute conveys to you more power of life, more strength. Fear not my presence, my dear Anna; I will be quiet, calm, immoveable as your clock, if I might only reckon the hours by it near to you. I want to see what they give you, and how they nurse you. Do not take any more medicine; it does no good when people are getting better, excepting that it spoils one's teeth, and teaches one to make faces. Do not take anything but what is agreeable to you, let people say what they may!

AXEL TO ANNA.

Wait, and wait, and wait, for ever! You good people, who so calmly and so immoveably admonish to patience, and waiting, and quietness, Heaven must

have made you, in its anger, out of so much earth, that you cannot conceive to yourselves an idea of fire and air. Your barometer, which perpetually stands at the monotonous height of steady and fine weather, has not the least thing in common with that which for ever falls and rises in sensitive hearts—from repose to storm—from sunshine to rain. God bless you, ye good folks! I am sorry for you with my whole heart.

AXEL TO ANNA.

It is you, Anna, whom I have to thank, that I no longer feel those oppressive pangs, those gnawings of conscience. Fear not, my Anna, that although the consequences of my transgressions—crimes they were—through the mercy of God, were so soon abrogated,—fear not that the remembrance will ever be extinguished in my soul. I shall never forget them!—I will remind myself every moment how fervently I must strive after making you forget what I once was. My gentle Anna, thou only shalt forget it.

ANNA TO AXEL.

I can hold the pen once more!—can again write to Axel—my Axel! Yet you must not come down to me; I am still too weak. To see you again, with the full consciousness—with the full feeling of our happiness—for that I am still too weak.

ANNA TO AXEL.

My thanks, Axel, for the flowers, fruit, and all which you have sent to me. My chamber now resembles a beautiful garden. My aunt, to be sure, is not satisfied with this change; but she does not trust herself to say one word against it. Ever since the moment when you from the sill of my chamber-door set her up aloft on the bookcase, and besought her to be quiet, she has had such a panic fear of you that she never ventures to touch anything which comes from you. She seems to dread that an electrical spark may start forth from the thing which you have handled. As far as concerns myself, I find the flowers so beautiful, the fruit so good, that I see myself surrounded by them with the most heartfelt satisfaction, although they come from the wild, violent Axel.

Axel, we have been, however, unjust towards our relations. We wished to plunge into misery,—they wished to hinder our doing so. Were they wrong in doing so? They were perhaps too stern, but their intention was good.

AXEL TO ANNA.

You find yourself worse to-day, Rosina tells me—the too strong smell of the flowers. Oh! I, bird of ill luck! Pull them out, and fling all the pots out of the window, this very moment, otherwise I shall

come and do it myself. Anna, may I? Anna, let me come!

ANNA TO AXEL.

Out of compassion for the heads of the poor passers-by, and out of justice to the innocent flower-pots themselves, they are not thrown out of the window, but only carried out into another room; where I, for the first time, will again see my Axel, when I have strength enough for it. You may not come to me. In the mean time, be quite easy about me—I am now well again.

AXEL TO ANNA.

Now God be praised!—that is all I can say. Should not you, however, perhaps, take a strengthening medicine? Ask the doctor, dearest Anna. Or it is the best that I should speak with him when he comes from you—the happy fellow!

ANNA TO AXEL.

We shall see whether you recognise me, Axel, when you see me again. I am very much changed by my illness; thin, pale, with sunken eyes and cheeks; not any longer pretty, no longer like the Crown Princess in the least.

AXEL TO ANNA.

Look, Anna, I imagine to myself that you are

become lame—that your eyes are little and squinting like your aunt's—that your nose is flat, your teeth black, your hands green, your feet big. I imagine to myself that my Anna is become thus through my fault; my Anna, with her angel-heart, her heavenly goodness. And at the feet of *this* Anna, I long, I burn with impatience, to throw myself, and to say to her—"Anna, I am unworthy of you, but I love you indescribably. Despise me not—thrust me not away—love me for my love's sake. Be again poor—but be mine; and, as a begging-gipsy, I will nevertheless every day of my life thank heaven and you for a happiness whose excess I am unable to bear.

ANNA TO AXEL.

O fanatic! I fear your wings will not carry you far. Be calm in the mean time—you will not be so severely tried. Anna is no longer lovely—but *thus* she does not look. But Axel, when will you be less violent, less eccentric, when more reasonable!

AXEL TO ANNA.

When you are my wife; when I see you, hear you, am with you every day, every hour. Yet that which I lately wrote was no exaggeration, no fanaticism; it was my heart's most inward, truest feeling.

ANNA TO AXEL.

O the indescribably charming air of spring! I

enjoy it through the open window, sitting among your flowers. The sun penetrates me with new life and new warmth. The birds twitter upon the budding trees of the terrace; all is beautiful, mild, and glorious! If there be a feeling on earth that is delicious and blesses, that calls forth sweet tears of joy and of peace, it is after a bed of sickness and pain, when one awakens again to life—to a life, where only spring airs, and only flowers, beckon to us. How quiet, how pure, is all within us! How accessible are we to joy, how inclined to all that is good! I have to-day, in beautiful, inestimable moments, saluted life, and have inwardly thanked the All-good Giver of it. To-morrow, Axel, I expect you; to-morrow, about noon.

AXEL TO ANNA.

To-morrow! I cannot say more; nay, all lies in the word—to-morrow!

ANNA TO AXEL.

We will be quiet and calm, Axel. We were children before,—now we are become old. We have suffered—do not let us forget that. Like tempests, which purify the air, are the passions to the soul. When they have ceased to rage, may they also have been so to us. Axel, we will be quiet, clear, pure, and full of peace, like this beautiful spring day.

To-day, about noon, Axel. I have selected the most beautiful oranges, that I may eat them with

you. You must also see how well your flowers have been cared for. To water them, and attend to them, has been the first and dearest exercise of my returning strength.

AXEL TO ANNA.

I have seen you! For several hours I have not been able to write. Now it is evening—dark, silent, calm,—now I am stiller. But I know one thing only; I feel one thing; I have seen you!

AXEL TO ANNA.

Anna, you are divinely good—angelically beautiful! O you have nothing earthly about you! Your love, Anna! O that is every thing for me!

AXEL TO ANNA.

How charming were you in the white simple dress! Dress always thus, Anna! White does not become every one, but this colour seems made for you—you snow-white innocence. How you sate there in the bright flower world, so simple, so white, so inexpressibly lovely! you seemed to me a pure angel, whose lofty humility ought to receive the homage of all the greatness of the earth. For one moment it fell like a veil before my eyes; I took this for a cloud which floated around you, and I fancied for one inconsiderate minute, that you were being floated away

to the land which is high above the clouds. At your knees, your hands in mine, my lips upon yours, I awoke—saw you—saw myself—saw the earth—No, heaven!

AXEL TO ANNA.

I can scarcely accustom myself to my happiness, so sudden, so great, so undeserved, as it is. Every morning it surprises me almost like an earthquake. And I must, indeed, speak Anna's sweet name fifty times before the stormy beating of my heart becomes calmer.

Now I must see Emil, and tell him that he is an angel. I will go to him. Ah, there he comes even to me.

AXEL TO ANNA.

A house bought—furniture; the domestic management brought into order—my business arranged; the banns published to-day—in eight days the marriage! “Emil, who art thou? Art thou an angel—a God?” “I am—Anna's lover!” “O the thous—you should leave that!” “I will be your common friend.” “You may never come into my house!” “Thither shall I—not now—I will take a journey.” “But you come again, however?” “As a married man. Farewell, Axel! be worthy of Anna, be happy!”

This Emil—and—and I! Anna, how does this Emil please you?

ANNA TO AXEL.

He is better, nobler than Axel; but I only love Axel; so unreasonable, so inexplicable is the human heart, so weak is mine. Do you reproach me, Axel?

AXEL TO ANNA.

Anna, reconcile me with myself. I am not worthy of you, I never can be!

ANNA TO AXEL.

I love you—and in a few days will be your wife—who from you expects her whole well-being—her whole happiness.

Your little sister shall come to us. I will be her mother.

AXEL TO ANNA.

If the angels of heaven would take in hand to make people wise and good by benefits, I would bet ten to one that they would succeed.

I write no more to you, Anna—I remain with you.

Notes remind me only of bolted doors, of jealousy, mistrusts and despair; and away with bolted doors, with black despair, black jealousy, and all black things,—yes, even with ink—away with it! May these between my wife and me never become necessary!

ANNA TO AXEL.

Amen!

JANNE TO HER SISTER ULLA.

Do you know, dear Ulla, the correspondence, as it was called, is now at an end. The whole spring-time have I been running up stairs and down stairs with little written bits of paper, called notes, between a young lady and a young gentleman. And I had always the while a pair of boots or shoes, which I was always cleaning in my hand, and I looked as innocent as a blacking-bottle. And do you know that for every note which I delivered in the stated place, I got one, or indeed two, three shillings, and several times a whole dollar in my pocket. Several times I received a few good sound boxes on my ear from the young gentleman, who was passionate beyond measure; and indeed for this reason, because I had not a note, whilst he declared that I must have one, namely, from the young lady. For which, however, I afterwards received as a plaster, a twelve-shilling note, so that I would willingly have had more of them.

How many notes there were altogether is more than my poor head can count. The sum and substance is, that I have scraped together thirty rix-dollars; that I shall leave the dear city of Stockholm,

where a bit of bread and butter costs more than the whole stomach is worth; that I hasten home towards Småland, buy our mother a little house, and after all my drudgery settle down with her in quiet. Here I am no longer of any use. The correspondence is at an end. The gentlefolks are married. God give them His peace!

HOPES.

H O P E S.

I had a peculiar method of wandering without very much pain along the stormy path of life, although, in a physical as well as in a moral sense, I wandered almost barefoot,—I *hoped*, hoped from day to day; in the morning my hopes rested on evening, in the evening on the morning; in the autumn upon the spring, in spring upon the autumn; from this year to the next, and thus, amid mere hopes, I had passed through nearly thirty years of my life, without, of all my privations, painfully perceiving the want of anything but whole boots. Nevertheless, I consoled myself easily for this out of doors in the open air, but in a drawing-room it always gave me an uneasy manner to have to turn the heels, as being the part least torn, to the front. Much more oppressive was it to me, truly, that I could in the abodes of misery only console with kind words.

I comforted myself, like a thousand others, by a hopeful glance upon the rolling wheel of fortune,

and with the philosophical remark, "when the time comes, comes the counsel."

As a poor assistant to a country clergyman with a narrow income and meagre table, morally becoming mouldy in the company of the scolding housekeeper, of the willingly fuddled clergyman, of a foolish young gentleman, and the daughters of the house, who, with high shoulders and turned-in toes, went from mornning to night paying visits, I felt a peculiarly strange emotion of tenderness and joy as one of my acquaintance informed me by writing, that my uncle, the Merchant P——, in Stockholm, to me personally unknown, now lay dying, and in a paroxysm of kindred affection had inquired after his good-for-nothing nephew.

With a flat, meagre little bundle and a million of rich hopes, the grateful nephew now allows himself to be shook up hill and down hill, upon an uncommonly uncomfortable and stiff-necked peasant-cart, and arrived head-over-heels in the capital.

In the inn where I alighted I ordered for myself a little—only a very little breakfast,—a trifle—a bit of bread and butter—a few eggs.

The landlord and a fat gentleman walked up and down the saloon and chatted. "Nay, that I must say," said the fat gentleman, "this Merchant P——, who died the day before yesterday, he was a fine fellow."

"Yes, yes," thought I; "aha, aha, a fine fellow, who had heaps of money! Hear you, my friend,"

(to the waiter), "could not you get me a bit of venison, or some other solid dish? Hear you, a cup of bouillon would not be amiss. Look after it, but quick!"

"Yes," said mine host now, "it is strong! Thirty thousand dollars, and they banko! Nobody in the whole world could have dreamed of it—thirty thousand!"

"Thirty thousand!" repeated I, in my exultant soul, "thirty thousand! Hear, youth, waiter! Make haste, give me here thirty thou—; no, give me here banko,—no, give me here a glass of wine, I mean;" and from head to heart there sang in me, amid the trumpet-beat of every pulse in alternating echoes, "Thirty thousand! Thirty thousand!"

"Yes," continued the fat gentleman, "and would you believe that in the mass of debts there are nine hundred dollars for cutlets, and five thousand dollars for champagne. And now all his creditors stand there prettily, and open their mouths; all the things in the house are hardly worth two farthings; and out of the house they find, as the only indemnification—a calasch!"

"Aha, that is something quite different! Hear you, youth, waiter! Eh, come you here! take that meat, and the bouillon, and the wine away again; and hear you, observe well, that I have not eaten a morsel of all this. How could I, indeed; I that ever since I opened my eyes this morning have done nothing else but eat (a horrible untruth!) and it just

now occurs to me that it would therefore be unnecessary to pay money for such a superfluous feast."

"But you have actually ordered it," replied the waiter in a state of excitement.

"My friend," I replied, and seized myself behind the ear, a place whence people, who are in embarrassment, are accustomed in some sort of way to obtain the necessary help; "my friend, it was a mistake for which I must not be punished; for it was not my fault that a rich heir, for whom I ordered the breakfast, is all at once become poor,—yes, poorer than many a poor devil, because he has lost more than the half of his present means upon the future. If he, under these circumstances, as you may well imagine, cannot pay for a dear breakfast, yet it does not prevent my paying for the eggs which I have devoured, and giving you over and above something handsome for your trouble, as business compels me to move off from here immediately!"

By my excellent logic, and the "something handsome," I removed from my throat, with a bleeding heart and a watering mouth, that dear breakfast, and wandered forth into the city, with my little bundle under my arm, to seek for a cheap room, whilst I considered where I was to get the money for it.

In consequence of the violent coming in contact of hope and reality I had a little headache. But when I saw upon my ramble a gentleman, ornamented with ribbons and stars, alight from a magnificent carriage,

who had a pale yellow complexion, a deeply wrinkled brow, and above his eyebrows an intelligible trace of ill-humour; when I saw a young count, with whom I had become acquainted in the University of Upsala, walking along as if he were about to fall on his nose from age and weariness of life, I held up my head, inhaled the air, which accidentally (unfortunately) at this place was filled with the smell of smoked sausage, and extolled poverty and a pure heart.

I found at length, in a remote street, a little room, which was more suited to my gloomy prospects than to the bright hopes which I cherished two hours before.

I had obtained permission to spend the winter in Stockholm, and had thought of spending it in quite a different way to what now was to be expected. But what was to be done? To let the courage sink was the worst of all; to lay the hands in the lap and look up to heaven, not much better. "The sun breaks forth when one least expects it," thought I, as heavy autumn clouds descended upon the city. I determined to use all the means I could to obtain for myself a decent subsistence, with a somewhat pleasanter prospect for the future, than was opened to me under the miserable protection of Pastor G., and, in the mean time, to earn my daily bread by copying,—a sorrowful expedient in a sorrowful condition.

Thus I passed my days amid fruitless endeavours to find ears which might not be deaf, amid the heart-

wearing occupation of writing out fairly the empty productions of empty heads, with my dinners becoming more and more scanty, and with ascending hopes, until that evening against whose date I afterwards made a cross in my calendar.

My host had just left me with the friendly admonition to pay the first quarter's rent on the following day, if I did not prefer (the politeness is French) to march forth again with bag and baggage on a voyage of discovery through the streets of the city.

It was just eight o'clock, on an indescribably cold November evening, when I was revived with this affectionate salutation on my return from a visit to a sick person, for whom I, perhaps—really somewhat inconsiderately, had emptied my purse.

I snuffed my sleepy thin candle with my fingers, and glanced around the little dark chamber, for the further use of which I must soon see myself compelled to gold-making.

"Diogenes dwelt worse," sighed I, with a submissive mind, as I drew a lame table from the window where the wind and rain were not contented to stop outside. At that moment my eye fell upon a brilliantly blazing fire in a kitchen, which lay Tantalus-like directly opposite to my modest room, where the fire-place was as dark as possible. "Cooks, men and women, have the happiest lot of all serving mortals!" thought I, as with a secret desire to play that fire-tending game, I contemplated the well-fed dame,

amid iron-pots and stewpans, standing there like an empress in the glory of the fire light, and with the firetongs-sceptre rummaging about majestically in the glowing realm.

A story higher, I had, through a window, which was concealed by no envious curtain, the view into a brightly lighted room, where a numerous family were assembled round a tea-table covered with cups and bread-baskets.

I was stiff in my whole body, from cold and damp. How empty it was in that part which may be called the magazine, I do not say; but, Ah, Lord God! thought I, if, however, that pretty girl, who over there takes a cup of tea-nectar and rich splendid rusks to that fat gentleman who, from satiety, can hardly raise himself from the sofa, would but reach out her lovely hand a little further, and could—she would with a thousand kisses—in vain!—ah, the satiated gentleman takes his cup; he steeps and steeps his rusk with such eternal slowness—it might be wine. Now the charming girl caresses him. I am curious whether it is the dear papa himself, or the uncle, or, perhaps—. Ah, the enviable mortal! But no, it is quite impossible; he is at least forty years older than she. See, that indeed must be his wife—an elderly lady, who sits near him on the sofa, and who offers rusks to the young lady. The old lady seems very dignified; but to whom does she go now? I cannot see the person. An ear and a piece of a

shoulder are all that peeps forth near the window. I cannot exactly take it amiss, that the respectable person turns his back to me; but that he keeps the young lady a quarter of an hour standing before him, lets her curtsy and offer her good things, does thoroughly provoke me. It must be a lady—a man could not be so unpolite towards this angelic being. But—or—— now she takes the cup; and now, O woe! a great man's hand grasps into the rusk-basket—the savage! and how he helps himself—the churl! I should like to know whether it is her brother,—he was perhaps hungry, poor fellow! Now come in one after the other, two lovely children, who are like the sister. I wonder now, whether the good man with one ear has left anything remaining. That most charming of girls, how she caresses the little ones, and kisses them, and gives to them all the rusks and the cakes that have escaped the fingers of Monsieur Gobble. Now she has had herself, the sweet child! of the whole entertainment, no more than me—the smell.

What a movement suddenly takes place in the room! The old gentleman heaves himself up from the sofa—the person with one ear starts forward, and in so doing, gives the young lady a blow (the dromedary!) which makes her knock against the tea-table, whereby the poor lady, who was just about springing up from the sofa, is pushed down again—the children hop about and clap their hands—the

door flies open—a young officer enters—the young girl throws herself into his arms. So, indeed! Aha, now we have it! I put to my shutters so violently that they cracked, and seated myself on a chair, quite wet through with rain, and with my knees trembling.

What had I to do at the window? That is what one gets when one is inquisitive.

Eight days ago, this family had removed from the country into the handsome house opposite to me; and it had never yet occurred to me to ask who they were, or whence they came. What need was there for me to-night to make myself acquainted with their domestic concerns in an illicit manner? How could it interest me? I was in an ill-humour; perhaps, too, I felt some little heartache. But for all that, true to my resolution, not to give myself up to anxious thoughts when they could do no good, I seized the pen with stiff fingers, and, in order to dissipate my vexation, wished to attempt a description of domestic happiness, of a happiness which I had never enjoyed. For the rest, I philosophised whilst I blew upon my stiffened hands. “Am I the first who, in the hot hour of fancy, has sought for a warmth which the stern world of reality has denied him? Six dollars for a measure of fir-wood. Yes, prosit, thou art not likely to get it before December! I write!”

“Happy, threefold happy, the family, in whose

narrow contracted circle no heart bleeds solitarily, or solitarily rejoices! No look, no smile, remains unanswered; and where the friends say daily, not with words but with deeds, to each other, 'Thy cares, thy joys, thy happiness, are mine also!'

"Lovely is the peaceful, the quiet home, which closes itself protectingly around the weary pilgrim through life—which, around its friendly blazing hearth, assembles for repose the old man leaning on his staff, the strong man, the affectionate wife, and happy children, who, shouting and exulting, hop about in their earthly heaven, and closing a day spent in the pastimes of innocence, repeat a thanksgiving prayer with smiling lips, and drop asleep on the bosom of their parents, whilst the gentle voice of the mother tells them, in whispered cradle-tones, how around their couch—

"The little angels in a ring,
Stand round about to keep
A watchful guard upon the bed
Where little children sleep."

Here I was obliged to leave off, because I felt something resembling a drop of rain come forth from my eye, and therefore could not any longer see clearly.

"How many," thought I, as my reflections, against my will, took a melancholy turn: "how many are there who must, to their sorrow, do without this

highest happiness of earthly life—domestic happiness!”

For one moment I contemplated myself in the only whole glass which I had in my room—that *of truth*,—and then wrote again with gloomy feeling:—“Unhappy, indeed, may the forlorn one be called, who, in the anxious and cool moments of life (which, indeed, come so often), is pressed to no faithful heart, whose sigh nobody returns, whose quiet grief nobody alleviates with a ‘I understand thee, I suffer with thee!’

“He is cast down, nobody raises him up; he weeps, nobody sees it, nobody will see it; he goes, nobody follows him; he comes, nobody goes to meet him; he rests, nobody watches over him. He is lonely. O how unfortunate he is! Why dies he not? Ah, who would weep for him? How cold is a grave which no warm tears of love moisten!

“He is lonesome in the winter night; for him the earth has no flowers, and dark burn the lights of heaven. Why wanders he, the lonesome one; why waits he; why flies he not, the shadow, to the land of shades? Ah, he still hopes, he is a mendicant who begs for joy, who yet waits in the eleventh hour, that a merciful hand may give him an alms.

“One only little blossom of earth will he gather, bear it upon his heart, in order henceforth not so lonesomely, not so entirely lonesome, to wander down to rest.”

It was my own condition which I described. I defined myself.

Early deprived of my parents, without brothers and sisters, friends and relations, I stood in the world yet so solitary and friendless, that but for an inward confidence in heaven and a naturally happy temper, I should long enough have wished to leave this unconsoling world:—all now, however, I had almost unconsciously begun from the future, and this more from an instinctive feeling that this might be the best, than from science by philosophy every too vivid wish for an agreeable present time, because it was altogether so opposed to possibility. For some time, however, and I had been otherwise with me; I felt, and especially this evening, more than ever an inexpressible desire to have somebody to love,—to have some one about me who would cleave to me—who would be a friend to me;—in short, to have (for me the highest felicity on earth) a wife—a beloved, devoted wife! O she would comfort me, she would cheer me! her affection, even in the poorest hut, would make of me a king. That the love-fire of my heart would not insure the faithful being at my side from being frozen was soon made clearly sensible to me by an involuntary shudder. More dejected than ever, I rose up and walked a few times about my room (that is to say, two steps right forward, and then turn back again). The sense of my condition followed me like the shadow on the wall, and for the

first time in my life I felt myself cast down, and threw a gloomy look on my dark future. I had no patron, therefore could not reckon upon promotion for a long time, consequently also not upon my own bread—on a friend—a wife, I mean.

“But what in all the world,” said I yet once more seriously to myself, “what helps beating one’s brains?” Yet once more I tried to get rid of all anxious thoughts. “If, however, a Christian soul could only come to me this evening! Let it be whoever it would—friend or foe—it would be better than this solitude. Yes, even if an inhabitant of the world of spirits opened the door, he would be welcome to me! What was that? Three blows on the door! I will not, however, believe it—again three!” I went and opened; there was nobody there; only the wind went howling up and down the stairs. I hastily shut the door again, thrust my hands into my pockets, and went up and down for a while humming aloud. Some moments afterwards I fancied I heard a sigh!—I was silent, and listened,—again there was very evidently a sigh—and yet once again, so deep and so mournful that I exclaimed with secret terror, “Who is there?” No answer.

For a moment I stood still, and considered what this really could mean, when a horrible noise, as if cats were sent with yells lumbering down the whole flight of stairs, and ended with a mighty blow against my door, put an end to my indecision. I took up

the candle, and a stick, and went out. At the moment when I opened the door my light was blown out. A gigantic white figure glimmered opposite to me, and I felt myself suddenly embraced by two strong arms. I cried for help, and struggled so actively to get loose, that both myself and my adversary fell to the ground, but so that I lay uppermost. Like an arrow I sprung again upright, and was about to fetch a light, when I stumbled over something—God knows what it was (I firmly believe that somebody held me fast by the feet), by which I fell a second time, struck my head on the corner of the table, and lost my consciousness, whilst a suspicious noise, which had great resemblance to laughter, rung in my ears.

When I again opened my eyes, they met a dazzling blaze of light. I closed them again, and listened to a confused noise around me—opened them again a very little, and endeavoured to distinguish the objects which surrounded me, which appeared to me so enigmatical and strange that I almost feared my mind had wandered. I lay upon a sofa, and—No, I really did not deceive myself,—that charming girl, who on this evening had so incessantly floated before my thoughts, stood actually beside me, and with a heavenly expression of sympathy bathed my head with vinegar. A young man whose countenance seemed known to

me, held my hand between his. I perceived also the fat gentleman, another thin one, the lady, the children, and in distant twilight I saw the shimmer of the paradise of the tea-table; in short, I found myself by an incomprehensible whim of fate amidst the family which an hour before I had contemplated with such lively sympathy.

When I again had returned to full consciousness, the young man embraced me several times with military vehemence.

“Do you then no longer know me?” cried he indignantly as he saw me petrified body and soul. “Have you then forgotten August D——, whose life a short time since you saved at the peril of your own? whom you so handsomely fished up, with danger to yourself, from having for ever to remain in the uninteresting company of fishes? See here, my father my mother, my sister Wilhelmina!”

I pressed his hand; and now the parents embraced me. With a stout blow of the fist upon the table, August’s father exclaimed, “And because you have saved my son’s life, and because you are such a downright honest and good fellow, and have suffered hunger yourself—that you might give others to eat—you shall really have the parsonage at H——. Yes, you shall become clergyman! I say—I have *jus patronatum*, you understand!”

For a good while I was not at all in a condition to comprehend, to think, or to speak; and before all had

been cleared up by a thousand explanations, I could understand nothing clearly excepting that Wilhelmina was not—that Wilhelmina was August's sister.

He had returned this evening from a journey of service, during which, in the preceding summer, chance had given to me the good fortune to rescue him from a danger, into which youthful heat and excess of spirit had thrown him. I had not seen him again since this occurrence; earlier, I had made a passing acquaintance with him, had drunk brotherhood with him at the university, and after that had forgotten my dear brother.

He had now related this occurrence to his family, with the easily kindled-up enthusiasm of youth, together with what he knew of me beside, and what he did not know. The father, who had a living in his gift, and who (as I afterwards found) had made from his window some compassionate remarks upon my meagre dinner-table, determined, assailed by the prayers of his son, to raise me from the lap of poverty to the summit of fortune. August would in his rapture announce to me my good luck instantly, and in order, at the same time, to gratify his passion for merry jokes, made himself known upon my stairs in a way which occasioned me a severe, although not dangerous, contusion on the temples, and the unexpected removal across the street, out of the deepest darkness into the brightest light. The good youth besought a thousand times forgiveness for his thought-

lessness; a thousand times I assured him that it was not worth the trouble to speak of such a trifling blow. And in fact, the living was a balsam, which would have made a greater wound than this imperceptible also.

Astonished, and somewhat embarrassed, I now perceived that the ear and the shoulder, whose possessor had seized so horribly upon the contents of the rusk-basket, and over whom I had poured out my gall, belonged to nobody else than to August's father and my patron. The fat gentleman who sate upon the sofa, was Wilhelmina's uncle.

The kindness and gaiety of my new friends made me soon feel at home and happy. The old people treated me like a child of the house, the young ones as a brother, and the two little ones seemed to anticipate a gingerbread-friend in me.

After I had received two cups of tea from Wilhelmina's pretty hand, to which I almost feared taking, in my abstraction of mind, more rusks than my excellent patron, I rose up to take my leave. They insisted absolutely upon my passing the night there; but I abode by my determination of spending the first happy night in my old habitation, amid thanksgiving to the lofty Ruler of my fate.

They all embraced me afresh; and I now also embraced all rightly, from the bottom of my heart, Wilhelmina also, although not without having gracious permission first. "I might as well have left

that alone," thought I afterwards, "if it is to be the first and the last time!" August accompanied me back.

My host stood in my room amid the overturned chairs and tables, with a countenance which alternated between rain and sunshine; on one side his mouth drew itself with a reluctant smile up to his ear, on the other it crept for vexation down to his double chin; the eyes followed the same direction, and the whole had the look of a combat, till the tone in which August indicated to him that he should leave us alone, changed all into the most friendly, grinning mien, and the proprietor of the same vanished from the door with the most submissive bows.

August was in despair about my table, my chair, my bed, and so on. It was with difficulty that I withheld him from cudgeling the host who would take money for such a hole. I was obliged to satisfy him with the most holy assurances, that on the following day I would remove without delay. "But tell him," prayed August, "before you pay him, that he is a villain, a usurer, a cheat, a ——— or if you like, I will ———."

"No, no, heaven defend us!" interrupted I, "be quiet, and let me only manage."

After my young friend had left me, I passed several happy hours in thinking on the change in my fate, and inwardly thanking God for it.

My thoughts then rambled to the parsonage; and

heaven knows what fat oxen and cows, what pleasure-grounds, with flowers, fruits, and vegetables, I saw in spirit surrounding my new paradise, where my Eve walked by my side, and supported on my arm; and especially what an innumerable crowd of happy and edified people I saw streaming from the church when I had preached. I baptized, I confirmed, I comforted my beloved community in the zeal and warmth of my heart—and forgot only the funerals.

Every poor clergyman who has received a living, every mortal, especially to whom unexpectedly a long cherished wish has been accomplished, will easily picture to himself my state.

Later in the night it sunk at last like a veil before my eyes, and my thoughts fell by degrees into a bewilderment which exhibited on every hand strange images. I preached with a loud voice in my church, and the congregation slept. After the service the people came out of the church like oxen and cows, and bellowed against me when I would have admonished them. I wished to embrace my wife, but could not separate her from a great turnip, which increased every moment, and at last grew over both our heads. I endeavoured to climb up a ladder to heaven, whose stars beckoned kindly and brightly to me; but potatoes, grass, vetches, and peas, entangled my feet unmercifully, and hindered every step. At last I saw myself in the midst of my possessions walking upon my head, and whilst in my sleepy soul I greatly

wondered how this was possible, I slept soundly in the remembrance of my dream. Yet then, however, I must unconsciously have continued the chain of my pastoral thoughts, for I woke in the morning with the sound of my own voice loudly exclaiming, "Amen!"

That the occurrences of the former evening were actual truth, and no dream, I could only convince myself with difficulty, till August paid me a visit, and invited me to dine with his parents.

The living, Wilhelmina, the dinner, the new chain of hopes for the future which beamed from the bright sun of the present, all surprised me anew with a joy which one can feel very well, but never can describe.

Out of the depths of a thankful heart, I saluted the new life which opened to me, with the firm determination, that let happen what might, yet always *to do the right, and to hope for the best.*

Two years after this, I sate on an autumn evening in my beloved parsonage by the fire. Near to me sate my dear little wife, my sweet Wilhelmina, and spun. I was just about to read to her a sermon which I intended to preach on the next Sunday, and from which I promised myself much edification, as well for her as for the assembled congregation. Whilst I was turning over the leaves, a loose paper fell out. It was the paper upon which, on that evening two years

before, in a very different situation, I had written down my cheerful and my sad thoughts. I shewed it to my wife. She read, smiled with a tear in her eye, and with a roguish countenance which, as I fancy, is peculiar to her, took the pen and wrote on the other side of the paper:—

“ The author can now, thank God, strike out a description which would stand in perfect contrast to that which he once, in a dark hour, sketched of an unfortunate person, as he himself was then.

“ Now he is no more lonesome, no more deserted. His still sighs are answered, his secret griefs shared, by a wife tenderly devoted to him. He goes, her heart follows him; he comes back, she meets him with smiles; his tears flow not unobserved, they are dried by her hand, and his smiles beam again in hers; for him she gathers flowers, to wreath around his brow, to strew in his path. He has his own fireside, friends devoted to him, and counts as his relations all those who have none of their own. He loves, he is beloved; he can make people happy, he is himself happy.”

Truly had my Wilhelmina described the present; and, animated by feelings which are gay and delicious as the beams of the spring sun, I will now, as hitherto, let my little troop of light hopes bound out into the future.

I hope too, that my sermon for the next Sunday may not be without benefit to my hearers; and even if the obdurate should sleep, I hope that neither this

nor any other of the greater or the less unpleasantnesses which can happen to me, may go to my heart and disturb my rest. I know my Wilhelmina, and believe also that I know myself sufficiently, to hope with certainty that I may always make her happy. The sweet angel has given me hope that we may soon be able to add a little creature to our little happy family, I hope, in the future, to be yet multiplied. For my children I have all kinds of hopes *in petto*. If I have a son, I hope that he will be my successor; if I have a daughter, then—if August would wait—but I fancy that he is just about to be married.

I hope in time to find a publisher for my sermons. I hope to live yet a hundred years with my wife.

We—that is to say, my Wilhelmina and I—hope, during this time, to be able to dry a great many tears, and to shed as few ourselves as our lot, as children of the earth, may permit.

We hope not to survive each other.

Lastly, we hope always to be able to hope; and when the hour comes that the hopes of the green earth vanish before the clear light of eternal certainty, then we hope that the All-good Father may pass a mild sentence upon his grateful and in humility hoping children.

THE TWINS.

THE TWINS.

Two charming rosebuds (the last in my garden) are frozen in this October night. I had so heartily pleased myself with the thought of delighting my old mother, who is a great friend of flowers, and, especially at this season, calls them her jewels, with two beautiful roses. Now my two hopeful buds hang without life and colour on the stem; they are gone—and with them my little birthday pleasure.

I contemplated them long, and felt the while tears come to my eyes. They were consecrated to the memory of two rosebuds of a nobler kind, which, hopeful as these lovely flowers, like these also withered away early before the night-frost of life.

Edward and Ellna, my young friends, how often in lonely hours does your friendly image visit me! Like mild breezes of spring are the remembrances of you wafted to me from the time when I was so often with you,—heard you, saw you, and in you the loveliest things which God had created on earth.

When I now see splendid fruit which has fallen

before its maturity, a blossom with a worm in the bud, any thing beautiful and good which soon vanishes, then I think on—Edward and Ellna!

Behold there, the beautiful country-seat surrounded by a magnificent park, where they dwelt with their happy mother! They were the youngest of many children which she had borne, the only ones for which she had not yet wept.

They were her darlings, her all.

They were so lovely that one could not contemplate them without emotion. The eye, wearied with the many unpleasantnesses and adversities which everywhere meet it, would repose with delight upon these charming beings, who in the pure glory of child-like innocence stood there, like promises of a fairer and better creation.

Their smile was particularly charming—oh, it was mirrored in their souls, that depth of innocence and joy! Two dew-drops, sent down from heaven in order to refresh the earth, reflect their image in their breast.

“Happy childhood!” have I heard thousands exclaim, who had already drank deeper from the cup of life, to whose edge children have only set their lips, and kissed away the fiery foam. “Happy childhood!” to thee is vouchsafed to drink amid pastimes the pure nectar of joy—whilst we, amid weariness and labour, seek in vain for a refreshing drop in the mournful draught which is extended to us.

And yet for all that, it appears to me that it is not with justice that childhood is called so happy. How many tears are shed by children! Tears of impatience, of desire, of anger; tears which shame and reproaches wring out; tears of envy, of indignation, and of despair,—in one word, all the passions which poison the draught of life to maturer hearts.

It is true that they need not shed these tears, if a wise commiserating hand always removed the thorns from the path which the little pilgrims of life tread. But often, quite too often, they are not removed—they are strewn upon it. Constraint, unjust reproaches, grow up like poisonous nettles around the poor little ones. How often have I seen it; how often have I exclaimed, “You poor children, you poor little children! why did they give a life to you, whose few spring-flowers they do not permit you to pluck?”

Freedom—freedom, this west-wind of joy, whose pure spirit alone is able to bring forth to perfection every flower of creation—if they gave but freedom to you innocent little ones, to you—born for immortality—who must wander through a stormy land! The breezes of freedom, not the simoom-wind of constraint, should attend your first steps, and the world then would not see so many feeble wanderers sink down powerless, and crawl wearily along their way.

The first years of Edward and Ellna’s life passed on in innocent freedom. Beautiful, friendly nature was their cradle. In the fields, in the woods and

groves, now they played, and now they rested. Often, as with their arms clasped round each other they lay upon the soft carpet of grass, had they been heard to talk of the angels, whose wings they saw in the clouds, which, parted by light gales, floated away in the blue heaven, high above the dark green summit of the wood. They have been seen to smile,—yes, sometimes to talk confidentially and child-like with them, praise their beauty, which (as they said) was far greater than their own. Often did they raise their small child voices to accompany the tones of heavenly harps, which they heard mingled with the voices of the wood. Their mother, who was always near them, believed in the reality of these appearances. And what, indeed, can one say against them?—that one has not oneself experienced anything of the kind. But how rarely was any one so angel-like and happy as Edward and Ellna!

Every one who knew them was obliged to acknowledge that they had never seen their like; and many a one questioned in pious rapture, whether these children were really like other mortals.

Around their white foreheads fell light-brown curls; like stars beamed forth their eyes below, in soft magical brightness. The charming smiles of childhood parted constantly their lovely lips, and formed in the rose-tinted cheeks little dimples, which people, I know not rightly why, so gladly kissed.

Their whole bodies were so beautifully formed,

their hands in particular were so perfect, that I once saw how a sculptor fell into rapture over their contemplation; and how an old gardener, not otherwise distinguished for his politeness and fine breeding, borrowed a pair of gloves that he might be able to conduct the little Ellna about his garden, the most beautiful flowers of which soon lay in her muslin apron.

Accustomed therefore to be admired without knowing why, Edward and Ellna shewed themselves gladly to every one who wished to see them, and quietly smiling, allowed themselves to be praised and caressed.

"We are so beautiful," said they in their innocence, without knowing what beauty was, and that the world considered the possession of this a piece of good fortune. The agreeable impression which, as they knew, they made, seemed, however, to give them pleasure, but only because it was so agreeable to others.

"Look at us!" said they to an old man, who wept the loss of his only son, "look at us, and weep no more!"

Accustomed to call forth a smile upon all countenances, they betrayed astonishment that any one could see them and yet weep, and in their grief, not to be able to give satisfaction, they began also to weep with him. That which their smiles could not do, they now effected by their tears. The old man took them in his arms, and felt himself refreshed, as by the

sympathy of angels. They were then heard to say to the mourner, "Look at us, we weep with you!"

Thus did these little Christians already in childhood follow the example of their Master.

People call children good. I declare that I have seen few which were not severe and cruel. Unthinking (therefore innocent) savages, they often torment in the most horrible manner creatures which are small and defenceless enough to become their victims. They curiously contemplate their convulsive movements amid torture, and rarely avoid causing them pain. O that so many people, who already know, who have already experienced themselves what pain is, should resemble these cruel little ones! They are not like them—innocent!

Often have I exclaimed with murmuring pain on the observation of their cruel pleasures, and the torments which their so-called necessary wants, their desire of knowledge, their inhumanity causes to millions of innocent creatures—"Man, this being that more than all suffers on the earth, and causes most suffering—O why was he created?"

Yet I know that all will be good one day,—no more tears will be shed—there will be no more pain. Humbling my head, I will quietly hope and wait for that higher light which is here denied to us. There is a God; therefore let the murmurs of man be silent!

Edward and Ellna were not cruel, as the children

of earth are commonly. They knew not however what suffering, what pain were; but it was as if they had a presentiment of it, and their most earnest endeavours were used, when they saw its horrible expression, to render help, and to alleviate it. If a poor worm crawled in the dust, hunted forth by ants, it was immediately released by their hands, placed upon the soft grass in safety where there were no ants. Whenever they saw a little bird which, accustomed to the freedom of the woods, with ineffectual flutterings struck its little head against the iron wire of its cage, the tears came to their eyes, they besought for its release; and if their prayers were indeed in vain, they put together their hoarded pence and purchased it. Then it went out in the field with the happy little ones. The door of its cage was opened; and when the little released one, amid exultant twitterings described circle within circle above their heads, then did the children clap their hands, and their hearts beat loudly with delight.

Not a day passed, on which they did not operate against something which was bad, or for that which was good. To be sure the sphere of the children's activity was but small, and that which they could do but unimportant. They were young artists, who early accustomed themselves to the beautiful and noble parts which they were later to play upon the great theatre of the world.

As for the nests, in the robbing and plundering of

which boys often find pleasure in the bold and cruel exercise of their strength, Edward and Ellna supplied provision. They laid this at the foot of the trees or hedges, where the little airy families had built their summer-dwellings. "The mother need not now fly so far," said they, "and her little ones need not wait and be famished!" They approached the places carefully, where the mother had bedded her eggs in the grass, silently scattered corn, and were very careful not to terrify the timid bird, which often by degrees, accustomed to the visits of the little angels, only flew off twittering, set itself upon a bush near, and waited quietly the going-away of the children, who joyfully, and not a little thankful for this proof of confidence, stole away so softly and lightly that the grass rose again under their footsteps as if it had only been bowed by soft breezes.

In order that they might not tread upon ants, which always streamed across the path on journeys of business, or upon frogs which hopped before their feet, the children remained standing, or made a little circuit. They never intentionally killed an animal, nor a fly, nor even a gnat, those Parias of the air, which find no mercy from the educated part of the human race. "It is really so delightful to live!" said the amiable little ones. I once even saw the little Ellna give up her white arms and hands as prey to these rapacious bloodsuckers. "I give them their suppers," said she smiling; "and—it does not hurt

me much," added she for the sake of her brother, who now, for the first time, shewed the somewhat imperious temper of the man, and forbade his sister to do this again, if she did not wish that he should extirpate the whole race of gnats, which probably did not seem more difficult to him than the conquest of the world to Alexander.

Ellna was obliged to submit. The gnats were chased away, and then Edward endeavoured by kisses to prevent the bitten places from swelling. The fresh smiles of childhood beamed from their countenances as they thus sportively contended, Edward to give kisses, and Ellna to avoid them.

I said that they never intentionally killed an animal,—I was wrong. If they saw a little creature tortured by the pangs of death, a fly or a moth, which had burned themselves in the candle, a trodden, but yet living worm, then Edward, as the least tender-hearted, hastened, with averted eyes and compassionate foot, the moment when pangs and pains would vanish.

"It is better to die than to suffer," said they, and turned away with pale faces.

"These children are too good for this earth," said those who knew them; "they certainly will not live long."

And yet, my God, it would be well amid so many pains, amid so much evil, if thou wouldst let these phenomena tarry longer here, which as it were

reveal again to us the stars of which we have lost sight, which gently and refreshingly remind us of whence we are come, and whither we go.

You good and amiable mortals—when I wish that you should tarry here, I do so for our sakes, and not yours! If the All-merciful call back again to his bosom these sparks of his spirit, which have illumed and warmed the unworthy earth for a moment—how well done is it of him, how good for you!

The May-day of childhood was passed for Edward and Ellna,—their youth dawned. They counted fifteen years.

Their child-like mind, however, was not much changed. The first violet which looked forth from under the snow; the first strawberry which was reddened by the beams of the sun, still called forth the purple of joy upon their cheeks; and the joy or the pain of their fellow-creatures drew from them now, as before, a smile or a tear. Only now they regarded more than formerly their fellow-beings as the worthiest objects of their care.

There was not within the compass of some miles a single cottage which they had not visited. The goodness of their mother gave them unceasing opportunities of enjoying the blessed pleasure of benefiting their fellows. "Tell us what you need," said they to the poor and sick, "if we can, we will help you." Now there was a softer bed; now more healthy food; now a little support in money; now a petition on

behalf of the indigent, which, always accompanied by gentle, kind words, spoken by two of the sweetest voices, made as deep as beneficial an impression. When help was not necessary, they sought at least to prepare a little pleasure; little presents were given to the parents, confections to the children, who of all the benefits most highly prize those which are conferred upon their sugar-loving gums; all these young lovers of noise and sweetmeats always attended on and saluted Edward and Ellna with loud cries of joy.

People warned their mother of the manner in which so much goodness might be abused. She replied, "Do not let us be too anxious. One single opportunity to do good which is lost, as is often the case from mistrust, is an irreparable loss. I acknowledge that we are often deceived by others from want of prudence; but with too much prudence we deceive ourselves. And then—if you only knew that which I feel when I hear every mouth blessing my children!"

If people would rightly thank Edward and Ellna according to their wishes, it were thus that they must speak to them: "I am now better, my pains are alleviated;" or, "I am now more joyful, and happier;" or, "God is good, he will not allow us to despair;" then were their hearts filled with the purest joy, and they thanked God.

In the mean time their happy endeavours, their charitable cares, were not extended alone to the poor

and the less educated classes of the people; they sought to assuage not merely the care which weeps, the suffering which expresses itself aloud, the silent sorrow, the consuming unrest, those small but insupportable afflictions which people do not willingly confess, but which are so painful,—all those adverse circumstances which hang like chains about the slaves of the polite and educated world, they imagined, and endeavoured with compassionate hands to lighten. One look, which in an unwatchful moment betokened a depressed heart,—one gesture, one movement, which betrayed embarrassment—a consequence mostly of uneasiness of mind,—seldom escaped their eyes; and they always discovered some means to make at least a few moments agreeable to those who seemed to be deprived of peace and satisfaction of heart.

When Ellna saw in society a sister-being to whom nature had dealt hardly, and who, in one way or another, seemed to betray the painful consciousness that she was unpleasing, she sought immediately to become acquainted with her; she went towards her, caressed her, and endeavoured in all ways to convince her that she found her loveable, and that she was gladly in company with her. Edward also came immediately to her assistance; and the attentiveness with which he offered a thousand of those little favours which one can never demand, but which are received with so much pleasure,—his unconstrained

lively politeness, — made, in connexion with the charming friendliness of the sister, an irresistible impression. If, on the other hand, Edward saw a youth who was neglected, or overlooked, or dejected; he always tried to get into conversation with him immediately. If they danced, he introduced his sister Ellna, who in the goodness of her heart preferred him to all the rich, handsome, and elegant young gentlemen who sought for one of her beaming glances.

How often have I seen countenances which betrayed minds depressed, displeased, or embittered, clear themselves up under the influence of the twins, and by degrees reflect back their gentle and beaming smiles. Plain features became thereby beautified, and one read long afterwards, in their more agreeable expression, “We can nevertheless be found to be amiable!”

One evening, at a dance in the open air, I perceived that Ellna had no longer a little bouquet, which her brother had made for her out of the loveliest flowers of the garden. I asked her whether she had lost it. “I have given it away,” replied she, reddening, and left me to dance at the same moment. I looked curiously around me among the young and loveable persons of the ball; no one had Ellna’s little bouquet. Afterwards I perceived, upon a bench which stood at some distance, a deformed, feeble being, whose limbs were all twisted; he held Ellna’s

flowers in his emaciated hand, and repeated softly, with an expression of devotion, "The angel!—the angel! she thought, she said, that flowers would do me good; yes, they do me good,—O what an angel!"

How happy they were, these young, so lovely and so good, brother and sister; how worthy of love they were, and how much beloved! People prided themselves on them in the whole country, just as they pride themselves on the gifts which nature has bestowed on the country or neighbourhood which we call our own, and of which we are so proud. People called them the angels; and, in fact, when one saw them, when one heard their melodious voices united in a simple song of praise in honour of the Creator, one could forget every thing else, and for some moments fancy oneself in heaven.

The tenderness which twin-children commonly cherish for each other, was so deep, so inward, between Edward and Ellna, that I fancy they had scarcely a notion of an existence apart from each other. They thought, they acted together; they always said *we*; they felt only their *I* in each other; this *I*, which, when it is felt quite alone in oneself, is so heavy, so painful a burden.

The beautiful life of the twins had hitherto flowed on without a cloud. No sickness, no care, no disaster, had cast one shadow on their pure brows. Life, which otherwise is so severe a teacher, seemed to hold her children in honour, and, for the first time,

as if she could not be stern. Each new day brought with it something to beautify them. Their countenances became more oval, and took ever more and more the lovely Grecian form. Their figures increased in more beautiful pliability, like two young trees which have entwined their crowns together. Their smiles were fuller of expression, and the goodness of their hearts beamed ever clearer forth from their large blue eyes.

People approached these favourites of God and men almost with adoration; people could have offered sacrifices to them; and yet, if one would contribute anything to their happiness, one must receive something from them. It was to me as if I saw in them young priests at the altar of Mercy, who imparted with humility the gifts of the divinity.

Their mother,—so much has been said, perhaps all that can be said in words, of maternal love and maternal felicity, but the love and felicity of this mother cannot be described by words, can, perhaps, only be compared to the felicity of the mother who saw the most holy glory of God around the head of her son.

At the age of sixteen, they stood in the full bloom of earthly, and at the same time, of celestial beauty. The world opened itself to them full of joy, love, and happiness. Before them lay a light, flower-strewn, peaceful way, upon which they could wander together, beloved and loving in return, happy and making

happy. They could be the benefactors and examples to their fellow-creatures; they could be so, and yet they could not,—at the age of sixteen they must die!

At the beginning of winter, Edward's Apollo-countenance began to burn with a hectic crimson, which kindled up and dyed his youthful cheeks with brighter red; but which, in the course of a few hours, faded like a feeble flame, and left behind the paleness of death. His strength began to fail, his beautiful slender figure bent forward like a tender young tree which has been bowed by the storm; his breath became short; his hitherto so ardent movements slow and languid, and his eyes had a clearness which promised the speedy lighting up of the whole being. The opinion of the physician was this—Consumption, and only yet a few months to live.

O now, how was every thing changed! As he approached the grave, Edward looked around him upon life, that seemed passed away from his eyes like his native shore from the sight of the seaman.

“I am so young,” said he, amid deep sighs; “and must die already! I shall leave thee, Ellna—must part from thee and our mother! And this beautiful life, this charming earth, good people, all, all must I leave, and die! O the dark grave, wherein I shall be laid alone—how horrible!”

Every thing that Ellna said and did had alone for its object consolation and alleviation for her brother.

And nevertheless she was so wholly unhappy; but she never thought of herself.

She said to Edward, "The sun has a wonderful power, my brother; come to the window, and let it shine on thee; see, here is a soft chair; here are lilies of the valley, which I have fetched for thee; enjoy their delightful odour; they send, especially in winter, presentiments of spring over all our feelings." Or she said, "Rest on me, my brother; thus thou wilt sit comfortably, and I will not stir." And with her brother's head on her breast she sate whole hours immoveable there, taking pains to keep time with his breathing, and to repress the uneasy beating of her heart. Another time she said, "Dost thou see how the clouds divide, how the heavens clear themselves up? It opens, as it were, and beams so mildly and blue above us. It is the answer of the All-good to my prayer, which I just now fervently put up to Him. The heaven of our happiness has dimmed itself—it will clear up again—thou wilt not die!"

Sometimes she sought also to awaken hope in his and her own breast, by jest and sport. She danced before him, threw playfully around him the light scarf which her hands wreathed in a thousand graceful forms around her own ethereal figure. She sang to him those little ballads and songs which life so easily takes hold of, and makes it also easy to those who listen to their attractive tones. But when only a feeble smile, a melancholy reflection of the former

blissful one, appeared on Edward's pale lips, then suddenly were extinguished all beams of hope in Ellna's eyes, and the twins wept together.

Often did she encourage him to make use of those means for the renewal of life's strength which, particularly in consumption, are resorted to, in order that the weak thread of life may not too suddenly be torn asunder. All these she prepared with her own hand. Who can number all that her inventive love discovered, to procure for him alleviation and amusement? Without the knowledge of her brother, she held her hands in ice-cold water, that she might afterwards cool his burning forehead as she laid them upon it. When she watched by his bed through sleepless nights, she read aloud to him, and told him such things as she thought would best please his then state of mind; for his state of mind was, as is the case with consumptive patients, unsteady and changeable. And in those gloomy moments in which Edward shuddered at the prospect of dying so young, and being alone; for he could not conceive to himself that he should not miss his sister in the grave. Then Ellna would promise to follow him. "How could I do otherwise," added she, "I really feel my life in thine!"

Yes, she could console;—and what woman, what true woman cannot? I ought, perhaps, seeing that I myself am a woman, to be more modest,—but if I believe it, if I express it, it is because I love,—and because, although I cannot turn aside the stroke of fate

from the beings who are dear to me, I have set the hope of my whole life on alleviating it. Yes, I believe it is *we* alone who can solve the enigma of pain in its least parts; and that it is given alone to *us* in the inspiration of feeling and of love, to have a presentiment of the evil which pain occasions, of that which is concealed in the gnawing disease of the sick. I hope and believe, and let nobody gainsay me, that as in the beginning of time, the genius of evil sowed poisonous seed in the flower-garden of creation, still that a mitigating balsam was placed by the All-good in the hands of woman, which could make the power of these less operative.

Ellna had said to Edward, "I will follow thee!"—and she soon followed him. The same symptoms of disease shewed themselves at the beginning of the spring in her, and the mischief make rapid progress in her tender frame, weakened by disquiet and night-watching.

To her the sentence of death was also announced by an honest and candid physician, who feared, above all things, to add new troubles to what was already incurable by fruitless attempts at recovery.

"We are so young, and yet we must, indeed, die!" said now Edward and Ellna, painfully. But this *we*, that united them, was already a drop of comfort in the bitter cup.

They took leave together of the flowers of spring, took leave of every day which unmercifully dragged

away with it a drop of their life's strength. People saw them often, as, supported on each other, they wandered about with feeble steps and sorrowful looks in the wood, in the fields, in the groves, where they had once played so happily; they took leave of every thing; of the earth, even of heaven, which seemed, however, only so glorious to them, because it arched itself above an earth which was a paradise to them.

"Farewell, every thing which we have loved!" said they, "we must leave all, we must soon die!"

When people spoke in their presence of future enjoyments, or of future good deeds, with the intention to amuse them, or, as it were, to enlarge the view, which an approaching night shut in ever more narrowly—they said, with tearful eyes, "We shall not be there; we must die!"

"Come to me in the autumn," said one of their neighbours, "when my grapes and peaches are ripe, and there shall be served-up to you an actual angel's entertainment."

"In autumn we cannot come," returned they,—
"in autumn we shall be no more."

"Next month," said a lively old gentleman, who was their friend, "my grandchildren, Alfred and Signild, come to me. They are good and beautiful; not, indeed, like the angels, but, believe my spectacles and my heart, not far, not very far from it. Alfred shall be Ellna's husband; and the little Signild, who is the apple of my eye, Edward shall have for his

wife. Quick and merry, like the chain in the quadrille, shall all go on in a twinkling,—falling in love, betrothal, and marriage. And a little kingdom of heaven one shall then find here.”

“Ah!” replied the angels, sorrowfully smiling, “we cannot be married, we must really die!”

And in all ways, and from all sides, came this death towards them sternly and severely, forbidding and disturbing all joy, and changing every thing into twilight and night.

And yet they must learn to love this death, which appeared to them so fearful.

Pain—the condition of life, and the terrible side of life—which hitherto had not ventured to approach these angelic beings, struck now its hyæna-claws into their breast.

I had heard them say “we must die!” with an expression that bewailed “we must leave the festival!” Soon afterwards I heard them speak the same words, but in a tone which expressed, “we shall soon repose!”

Thank God, this time of suffering was of short duration; repose came before the grave, and only a slow, almost painless wasting away, led them unobservedly down to the shore of life, where they might still gather a few flowers.

In the mean time they had suffered, gained experience, and from before their eyes vanished the fading prism which had clothed the whole world with purple.

the path which opened itself to them in the splendour of a celestial light. Thither they directed their looks, thither all their hopes, all their desires. Presentiments of eternity penetrated them, and as they looked upon each other with a blessed smile, they whispered, "we are immortal."

When they, for the first time, had enjoyed the holy communion, peace alone was in their hearts, and the beam of their eyes was only a faint reflection of their inward brightness.

One anxiety, one only one, remained to them still, and this often expressed itself softly amid sweet tears, when they knelt adoringly before the eternal Fountain of Life;" "O, our God," said they, "if thy love, thy power should sometime penetrate and surround us with brightness, like this glorious image of thee, how—how shall we be able to thank thee?"

So passed the summer, whilst the angels cheerfully and submissively, resigned day by day, flower by flower, the crown of life.

Autumn approached—with it, at the same time, the earthly transfiguration of the twins. The nights passed for them sleeplessly. When it was possible they passed them in the open air, where their oppressed lungs breathed more freely, and the moist coolness mitigated the fever that burned in their blood.

Whilst the August nights mildly and peacefully wrapped slumbering nature in mournful twilight,

there burned in the souls of the dying brother and sister the clear torches of hope and of joy.

I have heard them, those words; I have seen them, those looks, full of immortality—for which there already existed no longer any night. And afterwards, for a long time, every thing in life seemed to me pale and colourless.

Autumn was come. Feebly sank the lovely heads of the twins upon the cushions which were placed around them on the sofa, from which they were never more able to rise. Those who loved them, now counted the seconds.

Suffering themselves, Ellna and Edward sought, nevertheless, to comfort and to enliven the mourners whom they must leave. "We will watch over you," said they, "when we are angels,—we will entreat God for you."

They looked farewell upon all when they were no more able to speak; and when their weary eyelids closed, they blissfully smiled.

Towards the last, however, a troubling disquiet crept into their hearts. They feared that they might not die at the same time—might not pass away together to that home of light, of peace, and of joy, for which they alone longed.

Sitting near to each other, they watched with secret anguish in each other's countenance, the progress of the disease. "How brightly beam thy eyes," said Edward to Ellna. "Thy countenance has

no longer anything earthly in it. It seems to me as if thou couldst spread forth glittering wings every morning, and float forth into the clear heaven, far, far from me!" And catching her round the waist, he pressed her to his heart with all the power of his feeble strength. Another time it was Ellna who said with a trembling voice, "Edward, how sunken are thy cheeks, how dim thy eyes! Oh, look at me! look at me! Thy breath becomes weaker—it ceases! Let me give to thee of mine—I have yet enough for us both." And seizing the head of her brother with her weak hand, she endeavoured, amid kisses, to communicate some of the feeble breath of life which she felt in her own breast.

Thus did the dying brother and sister endeavour to hold back, as it were, each other, whilst they felt how they were rapidly led forward by a mighty, invisible hand.

Friends, acquaintance, all who had known and loved the angels, assembled around them. As if to an altar, every thing which people thought pleasant and gladdening, was brought into their sick room. They did not give them, no, they offered to them, as it were, flowers, fruits, together with heartfelt wishes—honest tears—which were received by the twins with grateful smiles, and this promise—"we will soon pray for you!"

They placed harps in the room adjoining the sick chamber, and often played and sung them into quiet

slumber. When people contemplated them in those moments when the soul had taken a freer flight into the spiritual land of dreams, wanting no longer time and space, but floating forth over wondrous lands, having a presentiment of their future free and beautiful existence—then they saw, in the indescribable expression of their calm features, that they were removed far, far from the earth, and that for them the eternity of bliss had already arrived.

In the evening, they sometimes said to each other, with gentle smiles, "Shall we wake to-morrow in heaven?"

During a tempestuous October night, sleep descended unusually quietly and mildly upon the loving angels. Counting every stroke of the clock, the mother and her friends watched in the quiet room.

"How well they sleep!" whispered they who ventured to speak. "It strikes twelve. See how they smile in delightful dreams! The morning dawns,—they yet sleep. The storm has ceased—heaven brightens—the day breaks beautifully,—yet they sleep. Hark! they sigh. Or was it the wind which passes the window?"

The sun ascended, caressingly shone the golden beams on the angel-faces of the twins. They sleep no longer. They were awake—but in heaven! Pure flames, kindled from the same spark, which had burned together; now also are they extinguished here upon earth at the same time!

They had been earthly angels, they are now heavenly; and when an unexpected consolation, an unexpected joy refreshes one who is troubled and cast down, he says, "*They* have prayed for me."

And their mother, their poor mother?

Do you see, by the wall of the churchyard, that female figure, which sits there upon a stone, as immoveable as it? Negligently fall down upon her shoulders locks of grey hair—the wind plays with her tattered garments. She is old and stiff, but not merely through the influence of years. Do not pass coldly by—give her your sympathy—she will not much longer trouble you. Look at her crutches, at her dimmed eyes, at the pain of her silent mouth. Why does she sit here? Because she cannot be anywhere else. She is where her heart also tarries, by the grave of her children. Grief for them has troubled the light of her eyes and of her reason. She does not observe how the leaves of autumn fall around her—she feels not when the winds of spring melt the snow upon the grave,—but every day she goes there, and the summer's heat and the winter's cold find her alike unconscious. No one whom she knows speaks to her, and she speaks to no one. She has, nevertheless, an object; she waits—for what?—for death! Through the course of many years has she seen the graves around her open and receive weary wanderers to their quiet peaceful bosom—but she still sits a dead one among the dead, and waits.

[April 1st.

Be ye saluted by me, mild breezes, which melt away the winter-snow; be thou saluted, bright spring-sun, which penetrates with warmth and life the dust of the grave! From the home of the dead, from the still churchyard, have I to-day saluted life. I love this peaceful place, where the unquiet, throbbing heart, where every thing, comes to repose. I also feel in a breast, which has not been able to wait the time, the unquiet captive, which now in pain, now in joy, throbs so restlessly and violently, and it does me good when I can think that a time will come, when *mine* also will be among the reposing hearts.

The larks sang in the clear air above the trees, on the grave of the twins. There sate, as before, the mother still and immoveable upon a stone. A whistling wind passed over the churchyard, I saw a shudder thrill through her frame. I approached her, she bowed her head against one of the lime-trees on the grave, and still smiled. I saw with joy, that also her time of trial was at an end—that she waited no longer!

You beautiful flowers of the spring, now where the May sun calls you forth out of the renovated earth, cover and brilliantly adorn the grave, which will no longer be moistened with bitter maternal tears!

Lovely lilies of the valley, soft periwinkle, grow upon the hillock—

“Even as the scar grows over the closed wound!”—*Tegnér*.

THE SOLITARY.



THE SOLITARY.

WE have many a time seen in a sterile wild spot, a lovely flower standing alone, surrounded and secluded there by unfriendly circumstances, ardently, but vainly seeking for the sun, in whose light thousands of her happier sisters rejoice themselves, but which the barren overhanging rocks will not allow to force its way to her. Becoming pale and powerless, the flower, by degrees, bows to the earth the head, which was created to be raised upwards, and at last conceals her evanescent being amid the gloomy circumstances which are guilty of her fate.

One eye, which has accidentally discovered the Solitary, rests upon her with a sort of pity, whilst thought inquires to what purpose, and why she stands there so without joy to herself, and joy to any one? These involuntary hermits of the world of flowers have their prototypes in a higher sphere, and something of these I expect to recognise in the one whose hand

has penned down the following thoughts and features of a life not enlivened by many sunbeams.

It is no direct diary, no witty and interesting journal, that she has written,—ah, such are never written, except in the quiet hope, that a confidential friend will sometime look through the lines which preserve the remembrance of our fate and our feelings, will sigh over our cares, rejoice over our joys, smile over our witty sallies, love and hate with us, in one word—feel with us, and thereby become more intimately united with us;—No, her unarranged thoughts were like withered leaves, which the autumn wind shakes from the trees and strews over the earth,—even as they are the offspring of feelings, which in no beloved breast on earth may hope to find echo more.

May 17th.

It is spring! From my window I see the clouds, chased by fresh gales, like glittering swans sailing away in the clear blue; yet above them I see the eagle soaring higher and higher forth into the path of light. Ah! that I could do as she!—would that I could feel warm life-dispensing spring air! How narrow and cold is it within here, how fresh and glorious there in the distance, where the crimson of morning stands! I would—ah, know I indeed rightly what I would?

Secret and mysterious yearning,
From the soul's unfathomed depths,
Like a misty form ascending,
That is chased by quiet winds,
Floating in the farthest distance,
Thou dost draw me far off, far off,
Towards the undiscovered shores!

Over life's rose-flowering gardens,
And her verdant groves of hope,
Thou dost lead me, and enfoldest,
In dark grave-clothes, all the earth;
As the soul which, from home-sickness,
Wasteth in a foreign land,
Where it sees no single flower.

On my mind with might thou seizest,
And dost call forth plenteous tears
From a sweet and unknown sorrow;
And my heart, ah, how it beateth!
Will break forth from out its prison,
Will come forth to light and warmth,
Longing for another home!

There, where from the flaming orient,
Gloriously ascends the morn;
There, where in the western cloud-land,
Sinks the golden torch of day,
Yearns my ardent soul to flee;
There, my urging spirit drives me,
Over land and over sea.

Eagle, which so proudly soareth
To the golden sphere of light;
Fleecy cloud, which gentle breezes
Bear into the boundless space;
Tell me, in the far-off distance
Is it all so bright and glorious—
Reigneth freedom there and peace

Would I might, O bird, speed with thee,
On the fire-path of the sun!
Cloud, with thee that I might float forth
To the evening's purple shore,
And on gentle islands pillowed,
Full of joy no tongue can speak,
Sing there my own cradle-song!

Thus I cried. Down to his eyrie,
From his flight the eagle flew:
In free space the cloud had vanished.
Lonesome stood I. And the wind played
With my wailings, as if sweeping
O'er a sad Eolian-harp;
And in empty air they sounded,
Without echo, without answer!

I have heard speak of ice-palaces, and I myself
live in a moral ice-palace. The Count and the
Countess, my gracious patrons, are statues of ice;
and I, I am a poor flickering little flame, lighted in
one of the lamps of the saloon of the castle, which,
by degrees, is going out, from frost and icy-breath.

O it must still be indescribably delightful to feel,
to love, to live; in one word—to love.

I have, however, never loved anything else but

my own fleeting ideal. Never shall I be able to see it realised upon earth !

I am to-day twenty years old. Who troubles themselves about it? Who offers to me a flower in my flowering-time? Ah, if nobody rejoices because one has been born, one might very well wish that it had never been so.

I would willingly purchase the caresses of a father and mother with my life. He who has never experienced their innocent delight, has been shut out from the Eden of childhood.

When I read in novels and plays, of children who, when arrived at mature years, have found again their parents whom they have long considered as lost, I sympathise with heartfelt emotion which carries me out of myself. I exclaim, "Father, mother!" open my arms and weep—and yet I know that mine sleep for ever.

All the people whom I know have something in the world about which they interest themselves, to

which they attach themselves. They have parents, they have children, brothers and sisters, relatives, friends, or, if necessary, a dog, a cat, a bird; in short, some sort of creature for which they live, to which they are useful, and which requires, with devotion, the care and tenderness that is shown to them. Or they have an occupation, an object; in one word, a something which enlivens the present, and opens the future.

I wonder very much sometimes, for what purpose and wherefore I was born. If I were to question the Baroness about this, she would reply: "To sew for me, to be at hand when I ring my silver bell, to assist me at my toilet, to make up an evening the fourth at my card-table,—and besides this, to exercise my patience." Good heaven! am I too proud, if I think such an object mean and miserable?

Some people have an interest in life, which I do not envy them—namely, to quarrel with one another. That is the pleasure of the Count and the Countess, as soon as they meet for the day; or I fancy that they seek one another only to give each other this refreshment. In one thing only do they agree, and that is, to reprove me severely for the least error.

If I were placed by fate in a condition to rule over others—for example, in the place of the Countess—how would I carefully avoid severity and sternness in the reproofs and corrections which I found it necessary to give to my servants and dependents, especially to those who lived in my family! Their negligences would in the whole be so trifling to me, in comparison so wholly insignificant; because, even if they did occasion me a little inconvenience,—yet they could neither disturb the peace of my heart, nor cost me painful tears,—nor depress and molest my temper; whilst, on the contrary, my severity all too easily could make the faulty person feel all these evils. It is one of the great problems of life, not to occasion suffering to others, and even the most subtle syllogisms cannot find an excuse for those who have wounded the heart of a fellow-creature. For their own sakes also, those who have power should be kind and considerate towards their dependents. People may be often better served in trifles when they are more feared than loved; but how small is this gain in comparison with the loss, as is shewn in all accidental important occasions. Then the devoted servant soon shews himself as a friend, and he who is obedient out of fear as an enemy.

To play at cards every evening from seven o'clock till ten with three persons, who like the Count, the

Countess, and the old President M——, incessantly quarrel over their game and their counters (for we do not play for money), is a mortal pastime. The kings and the honours are to me actual murderers of pleasure. This evening occupation makes me feel still more intolerably how the whole day is for me like the ——

Poor little bird with fettered wings! In vain thou attemptest to soar away—thou escapest not—thou feelest for what thou wast created—thou wouldst, like thy fellows, bathe thyself in the pure, sunny atmosphere; like them sing thy airy freedom—and thou art fettered to the dust. Painful, painful is thy condition. So also is the condition of him who, with the ideal of perfection and felicity in his breast, bound by the fetters of mediocrity, yearningly goes about, yearningly strives, combats, wearies himself, hopes and despairs, and at last sinks down beneath the immoveably burdening hand of fate. With a thousand noble powers of activity within his soul, he sees every way to self-formation and usefulness closed against him ——

Impatience is a painful feeling. In order to suffer less, let us be patient.

If I could only do good in some way I would not complain. But I can—do nothing, nothing. In order to be completely captive, in addition to the walls of a prison, one must be a woman, must, like me, be poor and dependent. I know that in this respect I have many sisters of destiny in the world. O my poor friends! how gladly would I be able to console you! But, ah, I also am a fainting pilgrim in the wilderness, —I would extend to you a refreshing draught—and have not one drop of fresh water for myself.

When a person has deeply felt one single affliction, he understands all other sufferings.

I see two pictures, two sides of life—as unlike to each other as day and night are. On the first, what life, what pomp of colouring! The altars of love and of domestic happiness stand there garlanded with eternally fresh flowers. Beneath the shadow of laurels and palms, the fine arts exercise their delightful play, and drink freely, from the glorious, richly changing world which surrounds them, the nectar of inspiration. The sciences take their pleasurable, peaceful way to sunny heights. Every thing lives, moves, mounts upwards, goes forwards, becomes clearer, purer, more significant. From order, beauty and the dominion of the great whole, every lesser

part enfolds itself in the fulness of life, of grace and freedom. Nothing is mean, powerless, and heavy. On the contrary, all is great, rich, and points to immortality. Even misfortune has glory; it has its honour, its song of victory. The lightnings of the tempest, and the quiet magnificence of a bright sun, light up alternately the scene, and lend to it constant majesty. The second picture—behold a gloomy, misty autumn day,—behold weary wanderers, who, upon a wild, stony heath, seek for a resting-place. They would make a fire to warm themselves by, but a still, icy penetrating drizzling rain extinguishes the flame, and at last, even every glimmering spark in the ashes. Behold wretchedness become so wretched that it loses compassion for itself; behold how misfortune hardens the unfortunate against others, who are as unfortunate as themselves. Behold disgust, life-weariness,—behold—ah no, rather behold it not! close, if it be possible to thee, thy eyes, thou whose life resembles this picture. Mist and clouds that whirl above us,—ah! sink deeper down, and conceal from us the horrors which surround us, and our desolate, awful path.

Year after year goes on slowly. To me they are all like gloomy autumn-days.

Reproofs? for what reason? I do not deserve them. I complain indeed not. No expression of discontent, no murmur escapes my lips. I am thankful for the maintenance which is given to me (out of charity they say). I am obedient, submissive, I endeavour to fulfil all which is required from me. But I am not cheerful, they say, not merry; I always let my head hang down. Ah, if I must look cheerful, let them give some joy to my heart! I have, however, in order to please those to whom I owe obedience, studied before the glass, that I might find out the look which would give to my countenance the most cheerful and contented expression. At last, I am obliged, in contemplating these mournful, compulsory smiles, to weep right bitterly.

I read lately in a book, a sort of treatise on moral health, full of good advice against the sickness of the soul: "if thy condition be too oppressive, and thou feelest thyself unhappy in it,—then change thy condition." Would he indeed be unfortunate if he could do this?

Ah, I am of genteel birth, and the proud, distant relatives who, after the death of my parents took the orphan in the cradle, have the right of parents over me, although they have never shewn to me their tenderness. Still, however, they have placed them-

selves as such. I must either submit to them, or be ungrateful,—I have no other choice. Besides this, where could I go?

Marry—and marry M——? Never! I am not romantic; but esteem and friendship I must be able to cherish towards my husband, if I would find a shadow of happiness in marriage. M—— is avaricious, has a hard heart, and is always in ill-humour,—qualities which are intolerable to a wife who has a heart. Besides this, he seeks not a friend in me, not a true companion in joy and suffering, not an affectionate wife—but only a housekeeper—and some one who will bear his ill-humours and his oddities without murmuring. And I should take such a husband, only to get married—never, never at all! I am too good for that,—I feel my womanly worth too well, and never can nor will (let others do what they may) regard myself as a piece of merchandise. Most cordially do I compassionate those who, in a condition like mine, only to change this, accept of offers which are good in the opinion of the world, but which in reality are wanting of what is most necessary to a happy marriage—namely, all that can ennoble the heart and make it happy. Sooner or later the blinded ones discover that they have only exchanged a less suffering for a greater one.

Ardent, warm souls must find in marriage the supremest happiness or misery.

I must hate all that is mean and contemptible. I feel that I should hate M., and know not how miserable and contemptible I myself might not in the end become as his wife. I recollect having read some verses of Haug, which, with a little alteration, may be turned to my thoughts.

HE.

Oh women, ye were angels to the lover,
And now are devils when the wedding's over!

SHE.

Why thus it is, is not so hard to tell,
That which appeared a heaven we find a hell.

In the original, she is the complainant, and he gives the reply. But that which one sees every day is, that a bad, immoral man, ruins the character and the temper of his wife. People accuse many women of falsehood and craft, people deplore the same faults in certain oppressed nations. The answer to the one and to the other contain, at the same time, the explanation and the excuse:

"We have had tyrants for our masters."

Before I would be obliged to excuse myself in such a manner, I would rather preserve unchanged my joyless uniform life to the end of my days. Life is really not so long.

A year is passed since I wrote these words, "Life is really not so long." Ah, life, nevertheless, is long; its minutes seem eternities when one suffers, when one is pressed down with life-weariness. And must we not become so, when every thing resembles an eternal *no* to all our wishes and our wants?

I feel it deeply. In order to endure life, an affectionate heart requires the love and tenderness of his fellow-creatures—even as necessarily as meat and drink for the sustaining of the body.

O the heart that is condemned to throb for ever unresponded to! Hidden existence, which gave motion to it—in mercy let it cease to beat!

People should never contend about the misfortune, about the pain which others feel. We suffer in such different ways, and from so many different kinds of causes; we are so dissimilarly organised, and the relations of outward circumstances to our inward, our feelings, our capacities, are manifold and so various, that it is almost impossible for one person to judge of the condition of another. Where, also, we see suffering, we should reverence it, if we are not so happy as to be able to alleviate it.

Not long since, I heard one knowing female friend admonish another, less knowing, and yet less fortunate friend; "Thou hast, indeed, committed no

crime; thou canst not feel remorse; thou hast, indeed, no cares; thou hast clothes and maintenance provided for thee. About what, in all the world, needest thou disquiet thyself? Thou fanciest thyself only to be unhappy; chase away thy diseased thoughts, and thou wilt become as cheerful as me. Everybody has their cares. Perfection is really not promised to us on earth. One must use one's reason, and drive fancies out of one's head, as other people do."

The friend who was comforted in this way was silent; but looked, spite of it, more dejected than before. In her place, I should have answered, "It is true, of all the evils which thou hast named, I know none; but my unhappiness, therefore, is not the less real—it lies here in this weak, diseased heart, which I did not give to myself, and which painful gift heaven has spared thee. But precisely for that reason thou canst not judge me; and it would be just as consequent to deny the possibility of my headache because thou dost not feel it, as the pang of my heart because thou dost not understand it. Thou—but to what purpose can a longer answer tend, where my knowing friend would only shrug her shoulders? I will rather undertake in thought the part of comforter, but perform it in a different way. I would go to the sufferer and say, 'Rest upon me, we will weep together.'"

M. has been married for some time. His wife is very unhappy. I hope, however, that her rapidly-increasing illness will soon release her from the horrible life which awaits her in an unhappy marriage.

I cannot devote one moment of the day to reading. The Countess cannot bear that I should read in her presence. For that reason I spend one or more hours of the night in so doing, and these are the only ones which afford me any enjoyment of soul.

Many a gentle word, rich in consolation, has in these hours been spoken to the solitary forlorn-one by pure spirits, who have understood in their sensitive hearts all the suffering of weak humanity. Especially rich in consolation are these words, because they say to the unfortunate, "I understand thee!" It is to one, as if bewildered in a horrible desert, one heard all at once the beloved tones of a friend's voice. Then I often stretch forth my hands to the home of the noble departed, and exclaim, "O friend, thou who hast felt with me—hast suffered with me—send down for my refreshment a breath of the eternal rest which is now become a part of thee." But, ah! no tranquillising breath comes to us from the land of spirits—and perhaps also no eye sees from thence. I believe, too, that it is well it should be so. In order to be perfectly happy in another world, the glorified must be withdrawn from the view of misery.

But, ah, if the same voices, which are silenced in death, yet so piercingly exclaimed, "We suffer!" could once whisper to us from the opened clouds, "We are comforted!"—how much fewer bitter tears of despair would flow.

Ye dead! it may be your business to console mortals.

Why are there in our country no religious communities like those, which in other countries offer to the unhappy, who need them so much, respectable, sacred places of refuge? They might, indeed, be so well instituted that they would in no way oppose the laws of our religion and of sound reason. They might be what they should be,—sacred asylums for the unhappy, the forlorn,—for the erring who, repentant, wished to turn back to goodness,—for all those who from one cause or another are isolated in the world, who live without a determined object, without activity and without joy, and who thereby become every day more unhappy and less innocent.

All these should come together and form a great family, which, guided by wise laws, devoted itself exclusively to the purpose of honouring the Highest in the most agreeable manner—namely, by affectionate, active assistance to all necessitous persons, all such as are unjustly dealt by, all who are forlorn and unprotected;—which object of this great family, that for the

most part would probably consist of indigent persons, would only be obtained by united and prudently directed powers.

Here, those without relatives and friends would knit among themselves the holy and affectionate bond of the heart, and would find, mother, sister, and friend,—would by their side, and in noble emulation with them, clothe and instruct the neglected child, tend the sick, comfort the mourners,—in one word, might so live each day, that in the evening they would be able to say, “It was not lost.” Here might she who had gone astray turn back to virtue and to God, begin a new life and a new happiness, might feel the peace of innocence and the encouraging joy of virtue. Here might the unhappy one who is embittered by the world and man, find a home full of love and gentleness and good spirits, whose harmonious voices would soon pour peace and rest into the wounded heart. Here might the noble one, who in a brilliant sphere had felt her heart contracted by the nullity and the misery of the great world, descend, and, in the peaceful shades of a quiet, but useful life, become really great. The ardent, the passionate, to whom nature gave the soul of Alexander, and fate gave only fetters, whose eccentric power consumed themselves and others, would here let their flames burn upon the altars of devotion and benevolence, and feel in the joy of voluntary renunciation that the thorny garland of a saint is a loftier, a more

beautiful object of endeavour, than worldly greatness, than the world's song of praise, and that renown which yet reaches not to the stars. Here might all those who by nature, by fortune, or by the world, have been treated with severity, be embraced as by a heavenly mother, who, full of mild seriousness and pure love, would lead her children by a quiet, happy, and virtuous life to the eternal home, where love, truth, and felicity first meet with their prototype. O beautiful and blessed life—noble institution—innocent charming dream—would that it could sometime be realized!

I have sometimes a feeling of bitterness, which I seek to overcome—of envy, which I seek to destroy in its first shoots. But ah, how much does it not cost to preserve oneself good and gentle, when daily and hourly a thousand trifles, like pricking needle-points, irritate to displeasure and indignation. Neither should I have strength to be so, if many a time a single prayer for strength and patience did not lend it to my breast,—if many a time the reading of a good book did not call forth observations in my soul which elevate it above the nothingness of this world. But ah! it sinks again.

If I might, however, only breathe a little fresh air. The sun shines so magnificently—the air is so clear—the snow so white! O if I could for a few minutes be in the country—see the dark green woods, and hear their sougling—could speed across snow-covered plains—breathe of the clear light air;—in one word, could see free nature and feel myself free—how happy I should be!

Had not illusions, the enchanting, deceitful syrens, filled the ardent fancy of my ardent childhood—had I not desired so much from fate—then I could better have endured that cold life which is become my lot. That early novel-reading, how much poison it lays in young minds! What young girl of seventeen, that is only gifted by nature with ordinary attractions—that has a warm heart—and what heart is indeed cold at seventeen!—and has read novels, plays, and romantic poems—does not see, with entire certainty in herself, the some-time heroine in a novel, a poem, nay, even in a tragedy? The death of a tragedy-heroine is so fearfully beautiful, so sublime, so admired, so wept over, that it appears quite enviable; and sometimes the young reader weeps with indescribably painful joy over herself and her sublimely moving future fate, in the girl murdered by the hand of her lover.

Now steps the young girl out into life, and expects,

with strained impatience, to see it move around her full of love, full of great and beautiful actions, and rich in sentiments and events; and finds, often only what I have found, poverty in every thing; and could almost fancy that a hostile fairy had suddenly changed the enchanting magic palace into a horrible, fearful prison.

Her brilliant, varnished morning dream, has embittered to her the whole day.

If I were an instructress, I would, above all things, endeavour to defend my young pupils from that which, in the beginning, could excite and heat the imagination. I would endeavour to prevent, in every way, their adorning life with flowers which it did not possess, that they might be able some time to gather the few which it actually has. Therefore, my little friends, you must labour early to exercise your young powers upon that which lies near to you, and is useful and good within your sphere. When you are become older, you must labour still more and truly with attention and zeal—must never dream over life, but must use it, and at the same time enjoy it. Many grown-up people resemble the child who wept because it could not have the moon,—these are they who have early begun to seek for their happiness in the clouds.

Often, when I hear tell how one or another has met with a joyful change or an unexpected piece of good fortune—when I see how spring follows winter, and makes it forgotten; how sunshine succeeds to rain, calm to tempest,—there awakes in me too a joyous feeling, and I think, “All things change; all things upon earth change, like the earth itself; also for me will there probably some time be a change too. Hope is a fountain, whose secret and hidden veins well forth eternally in the human breast.

But when I hear of disappointed hopes, of wishes never fulfilled, of prisoners for a life-time, then my courage sinks, and I ask myself why should it go better with me than with others?

Sleep, ye feelings, wishes, hopes—sleep, and leave me at rest!

To lose interest in oneself, and in all that surrounds one, is to be sure sad, but yet at last it is always a kind of rest.

You say that the country is beautiful, that life

there is pleasant, that you are happy, that you are beloved. I believe it—I believe it; so much the better for you, but what good is it to me?

No! and should I also feel my privations a thousand times more deeply, still I will not, I could not become cold or indifferent to the happiness of my neighbour. O love, enjoy, and rejoice yourselves! Let every thing, to the very smallest worm, pant with joy, and only I, I alone, possess nothing, I will praise thee, God of goodness!

He too, who seems to me so great and good; he, that worthy image of God upon earth—may he be happy! would that I could purchase for him, by my life full of renunciation, a life for him full of affluence and heavenly joy!

And how? should I then indeed be unhappy!

Since I see him, hear him, some changes have taken place in me. The air is clearer—lighter.

Why does my heart beat when I hear his step, his voice even at a distance? Why do I become so painfully embarrassed when he approaches me? Why do I feel my cheeks burn?

His countenance is proud but gentle; his whole being full of a noble consciousness; it shews itself in his bearing, in his gait, in his unconstrained and graceful movements; one sees, one feels, that he has the consciousness of making by his exterior an agreeable and respect-inspiring impression, and precisely on that account he never thinks about it—and on that account it operates so certainly. The forehead is lofty and free, the eyes flash with fire and brightness, the nose is easily and lightly arched,—in all his features, in his whole department, is revealed the development of a free, powerfully, beautiful nature, which has only sought through the outward a significant expression of the inward. Freshness and life pervade his conversation as well as his countenance, and when he speaks, one feels that the fires of truth and goodness which sparkle in his eyes, dwell also in his soul. His voice is sometimes, perhaps, too strong and loud for the tone of conversation, but it raises itself upon the fire-pinions of thought and of feeling. It proceeds from a breast in which no single feeling is stifled or fettered. It is the voice of free-

dom, and seems made to speak for her. Thus nobly, thus beautifully gifted by nature and fortune, ought he not also to be good? Yes! he is good—good as I image to myself the angels. This eye, which so coldly and calmly can see danger and death approach, that glances with such defiance and scorn on tyrants and voluntary slaves—this eye has also tears of sympathy for the sufferings of a child, for the quiet pain of a woman. And should he not be good when he is so superior, so admired, so beloved! Elected to be king, he might perhaps forget his crown!

By the side of this glorious image I have, for the sake of the remarkable contrast, placed another, and contemplated now the one, now the other. This image, which is related to the first, like the shadow to the light, is my own. My deportment is dejected, it betrays the condition of my soul. My movements are, especially in his presence, often constrained and childish; this proceeds in part from the consciousness of my few charms,—in part from silly shame, which infuses into me a stupid vanity on account of my dress, which is almost mean, in comparison with that of others in my condition of life. I venture to speak but little, and when I speak my voice is low, and my words are often certainly inarticulate, because they have been accustomed to be silenced so severely; perhaps also, because his eagle-glance rests so attentively upon me, and he bends himself forward to listen to me. My eyes—earlier they had fire, ex-

pression, and animation, were clear and blue as the heaven—now they are feeble, without colour and expression—they resemble extinguished flames. Earlier my countenance had life and freshness,—now that gray-yellow colour, which indicates my past life, has spread itself by degrees all over it, and has chased away every grace. I could formerly laugh—I have forgotten how. My smile is melancholy. It is a pale, autumn-like sunshine, which speedily hides itself in dark clouds. Wearied by perpetual labour, and combating against the ever growing desires after a brighter and more friendly life, a certain indifference and coldness has by degrees overcome my soul—I have lost interest in myself and my own fate. I have by degrees carried my hopes to the grave, and every one has taken with it something of my life into the grave.

He is good—too good! Like the sun which rejoices with its light even the smallest flower, he wishes by his fire, his fresh spirit, his cheerfulness, to enliven even me. But ah! the most beautiful sun cannot bring again life to the flower which, already withered, has sunk its head to the earth.

He is very well read, has travelled much, has seen much, heard, perceived, and thought; it is, therefore,

not to be wondered at that his words are rich in meaning. When I have quietly listened to him with rapture for whole hours, it is to me as if I heard beautiful music, whose pure changeful melodies open to me an inner world full of rich infinite feelings.

Besides this, every thing, as well what concerns things as ideas, becomes to me clearer and more distinct, as if in a dark gloomy picture gallery all at once the day burst in and lighted up the pictures, the subjects of which I before had only darkly imagined. And if he turn himself to me whilst he unfolds his rich noble ideas, and full of goodness inquires, "Is it not so? do not you think so too?"—then he reads, probably in my eyes, my quiet admiring answer.

He spoke yesterday of his childhood. He has been caressed by father and mother; he was carried about in their arms, upon their hearts; and I!—when I was a child, when I became older, now even, always—always was my caressing hand, my loving heart, repelled. Well then, rejected and yet proud heart, cease to proffer thyself yet farther; and if thou must love nevertheless, break amid thy own throbbings rather than betray thyself, rather than place thyself in danger of being anew rejected, despised —

Quiet nights, why do ye no longer vouchsafe to me peaceful beneficial sleep? And thou, my heart, why dost thou throb so?

A certain agreeable consciousness awakens sometimes in me. I am then not so mean—not so altogether insignificant in the eyes of another! He shews me esteem, nay attention; he places value on my judgment; he encourages me to cultivate my talents: but that is done only out of goodness, out of heavenly compassionate goodness. God bless him!

It is too late, too late, merciful passer-by. Dost thou not see that the frost of many nights has lain upon the plant? Never again will it raise its head.

My daily prayer,—that which gives to me the greatest pleasure, is: “O God, give to him every thing, which thou hast found it good to withdraw from me!”

What joy, to pray for those whom one loves! What joy it is for me, to think, that my feeling for him should assume the form of a guardian angel, to turn from him a danger, to lead to him a blessing!

But never, never shall he suspect how much I have loved him!. Never shall he direct to me a contemptuous, pitying glance! It would be to me a dagger-blow!

I will burn these papers, my only confidants; and my heart shall be the quiet grave of my feelings.

O death! merciful death, why comest thou not? How delightful to me would be the wafting of thy refreshment-bringing pinions!

I have had to-night a strange, but beautiful dream. It seemed to me that I walked in a garden full of flowers. It was spring; the birds sang, the heaven was clear, the air mild and pure, all was beautiful around me—but I did not feel myself happy. I wandered softly along, and looked towards Alfred, who walked in the same direction with myself, but upon another path, separated from me by a little stream, whose silver waves sprang forward one over another, and whispered, "How charming, how charming, it is to rock upon cool waves!"

And I was obliged to repeat for myself, "How charming, how charming!" Alfred also looked

incessantly towards me, and it seemed to me that our looks by degrees began to beam.

All at once he went down to the shore, and stepped into a little boat which floated across the stream, and suddenly paused at my feet. Alfred reached forth his hand to me to enter. I would not, and wept, I knew not rightly why. Then he took my hand, and drew me with gentle force near him in the boat. I wept still, but felt myself not unhappy.

Then began the boat, as if guided by invisible hands, to move itself, and rocked lightly and pleasantly down the stream, whilst the silver-waves splashing leapt around it and sang melodiously, "How charming it is, to rock together upon cool waves!" I wept no longer.

Alfred and I talked with each other, and that which we said enchanted us. We floated softly away under balsamic-breathing flower-arches of lilachs and roses. The flowers loosened themselves from their stems and fell down upon us, whilst voices from them whispered, "How blessed it is to love one another, and to be united!" and we repeated amid joyful feelings, "How blessed!" Then came the night, but a night without darkness, for all the flowers began to shine in their bright colours, and every wave looked upward with a little bright shining diamond in its point. Above our heads floated a light cloud, from which beamed millions of stars. All at once Alfred said, "See there the grave!" And before us I saw

something dark, formless, horrible, into which we were hastily driven. I felt, however, no fear. Then something like the wafting of a wing touched our eyelids, and we slept. But our sleep had lovely dreams, and we ceased not to see one another. Then it was to me, as if a gentle kiss was pressed upon our lips, a kiss like that with which a mother awakens her sleeping child, and we awoke. A beaming morning-red surrounded us. We held one another by the hand, and ascended ever higher and higher into an atmosphere of rose-odour. I felt my being light and ethereal. Every particle of heaviness, of depression, of discomfort, was vanished; I felt it was for ever. In a sea of crystal clearness, which lay below us, our figures were reflected, and I saw myself so beautiful that it enchanted me; "Now, for the first time," thought I, "I am worthy of him!" In the midst of the transporting feeling of a pure and increasing joy, stole suddenly the thought through my soul, "If all this should be only a dream, and I should wake no more in dream, but in reality!" Ah, truly, all was only a dream. I perceived all at once the cry of the night-watch. "The clock has struck one!" and the bell of the Countess which called me to her. The Countess fancied she heard a mouse in her sleeping room, and would allot to me the part of a cat, which I perform extremely unskillfully.

Great misfortune enhances the powers of the soul; she mounts up to heaven from the flames of combat. It is an apotheosis, although upon the wings of the tempest. But those hourly depressing, consuming cares and disagreeables, those vexations, the cancers of life and of joy, O how do they not oppress the children of the dust—yet deeper into the dust!

I had just now a moment of quiet satisfaction. What was the cause of it I do not rightly know. I was alone; the sun shone into my little chamber; I felt its warmth with pleasure; the shadow of a budding lilac played in the sunshine upon the green wall. I thought upon him—on his goodness. I observed a little cloud, which at some distance from the sun floated lightly by, and said to myself, “Thus will my life creep on! Yes, ephemeral being, soon wilt thou be no more, and thy pain, thy love, will leave behind them upon earth just as little trace as this little cloud in the blue field of heaven. I shall be no more,—suffer no more. Peaceful thought!”

I am in the country! For the first time in many years, and that truly through his kind mediation, I find myself in a good, cheerful, and in every respect

amiable family. Here constantly assemble themselves the people of the neighbouring residences. They play, sing, dance, talk, and laugh, the whole day long. I am dazzled, like one who comes out of the darkness and suddenly is met by a strong sunlight. Even as the eye then experiences pain, so does my heart now. I am not ungrateful,—but I feel myself solitary; I am not happy—and never shall be so!

I am a dissonant tone in the joyous harmony which rules here; that I feel in myself most of all.

Seldom have I seen so amiable, interesting a person as the twenty-years-old Camilla. She and her good sisters endeavour to cheer and enliven me in every possible way; but they are—ah, they are too joyous, too happy! they are innocent children of the light; they have not had a presentiment of the mystery of pain. I have endeavoured to fall in with their amiable labours; but my smile has perhaps not been right joyous, and one of the tears which I often feel to fill my eyes has perhaps, against my will, rolled down my cheek and been seen; or my deportment, reserved, through habit, repels them; in short, I see that they are not at home near me, and feel

themselves restrained in their innocent animation; and they would certainly leave me to my own mournful self, if they were not prevented doing so by their goodness and politeness.

Ah, what has the owl to do among the larks? Terrify and silence their innocent songs? No; it is better that it return to its own dark nest.

My name's day. I had forgotten it. Camilla and her sisters surprised me with flowers and songs; they crowned me with flowers, embraced me, besought me to be gay,—said that they loved me. Amiable, merciful Samaritans, if indeed your anxious labours cannot heal the wounds of the sufferer, yet she will never forget to bless you for your goodness.

He reproached me with gentleness for my reserve. He wished I would seem joyful. I will attempt it.

Last evening, Camilla sung. He stood behind her chair. When she had finished, she turned herself

half round, looked up at him modestly blushing, and asked—"Was not this the piece which you wished for?" I did not hear his half-aloud spoken reply, but I saw his beaming eye meet hers which she cast down. Why did she cast it down? Beautiful, graceful Camilla! Look up gratefully to heaven, if thou perceive that feeling in his eyes which I read in thine.

His looks follow her. That is not to be wondered at. She is a rose in her full bloom, lovely, good and joyous. He gave her a nosegay lately of heliotrope, and a bee crept out of the flowers and flew to me, who sate at a distance, and stung me in the hand. I repressed with difficulty an exclamation of pain, but yet I did it. I would not have disturbed the two at any price, they looked so amiable and happy. I can give no joy, but neither will I disturb any.

And for that reason I must very soon return to my gloomy home. That is now more suitable for me.

I have endeavoured to give him a pleasure. I have arranged and adorned Camilla's brown hair, which of all the attractions that she possesses, is the one upon which she bestows least pains. I have succeeded.

He is ill! and I cannot approach him—not watch over him!

He is better. Tears of anxious pain, tears of joy, which I was unable to keep back—ye have betrayed me! But thou, Camilla, dost thou think that thy paleness, thy red eyes, have remained unobserved?

He entered, we suspected it not; he seized our hands—thanked us for our anxiety, our sympathy. What I did I know not; but Camilla saw that I trembled.

Yes, I will hence—to hide myself from him, from the whole world, from myself!

I am again in my former home. It is better for me here,—I fancy that here I am stronger.

He must know it—he has seen that which he is to me. And then? Should he know it always. He would not boast of it in vanity—for that he is too great, too noble! He would mourn over me; his

pity would not be heavy to me to bear, like the pity of the world. I should regard it like the compassion of a higher spirit, which looked down upon a weaker being.

Wherefore comes he to visit our joyless house, to enliven it with his presence? It is done from compassion for me;—does he think that I could not live without his glance? Oh, he deceives himself! Life can as it were nourish itself with renunciations.

Or perhaps he foresees that when he is separated from me, I shall find myself doubly solitary, and seeks now to strengthen my soul, that I may bear it? Therefore he comes again—therefore he speaks—in order to raise me to the strength of mind, to the repose which he himself possesses.

Therefore he exercises my voice, encourages me to cultivate my understanding, to seek for knowledge. But in my condition that is impossible; and besides this, how could it benefit me—will it make me happier?

Yes; I understand him and his angelic goodness. He has seen that he also was appointed by heaven to strike a wound into my heart; he knows it, and sought to prepare me for it; he would, if possible, alleviate it, make it imperceptible; he will divert my thoughts, will prepare pleasure for me—ah! he knows me not!

He is too good! It seems to me as if he pressed the dagger only deeper into my heart; but he knows what is best for me—and I kiss the hand which gives me death!

Ah, why so much kindness to-day, if he will set off to-morrow?

He has asked my hand—heavenly powers! He and—I!

I have refused his hand, with thankful words; but decidedly have I refused his hand! My heart beats with pain and proud delight! I have refused it, because I love him better than I love myself; his happiness I prefer to mine a thousand times, and could give him no greater proof of this, than that I would preserve him from a wife who is not in a condition to make him happy. Ah, I must weep!

Would not death by the side of life throw over this its dark shadow? I will be just towards myself. I am not in every thing unworthy of his choice. My life, my heart, are pure—and this heart loves him;—my soul glows for truth and virtue,—I am not conscious of one mean feeling—but ah, for the rest how little am I formed to beautify his noble life! My outward youth is vanished, still more so my inward. This spring of the soul, which sometimes however can recal the early withered flowers of the other. All my eager lively talents are chilled and dead. It is always to me as if there rested a heavy, stiff, iron hand upon my breast. I have felt too deeply the desolate emptiness, the gloomy melancholy of life. The bitterness of certain moments will never leave my memory. Never shall I regain that mood of mind, that freedom from care, which causes one to laugh so heartily—to be joyful,—in one word, to forget the future in the present hour. How bitterly should I have felt by his side—adoring him as I now do—my inability to give and to receive pleasure. I should, like Abbadona, feel my inward darkness, and thereby become still darker.

My health is weakened, and I greatly err if my chest is not affected.

Besides, what should I be in those circles where rank, mind, and talents, as well as his own inclination, call him, with my small education, my wholly inward poverty, my want of agreeable properties;—a despised

nullity, and a being whose audacious pretensions would there, where she is not in her place, make her appear with justice an object of ridicule. A wife without charms, sickly, melancholy, and who, because she felt all this, became thereby yet more dejected; that would be the sweet reward which fortune would have given for his magnanimity; that would be the only comfort for his pains, for the enlivening and joy of his life! Ah, he would hundreds of times have repented his choice in his own heart! And the kinder, the more considerate he might have been towards me, for that reason should I have been all the more unhappy. Yes; I feel that, pressed to his heart, out of the very despair of not being able to make him happy, I might have murdered myself. O that thou whom I so inwardly, so infinitely love, couldst but read my heart! Would that my constant, my warm prayer might call down upon thee that happiness which I cannot give thee!

He has never loved me; no spark of love conducted him to me; only for a moment could I deceive myself about it—the dream vanished—all became clear,—I saw what I had to do—and God and my love lent me strength to act properly.

It was only noble, heavenly compassion which led him to me—only goodness,—it deserved to be rewarded! A sweet, proud feeling overpowers my heart, when I think, “the noblest man would have raised me up to himself,” and I have treated him worthily! Yes; he has raised me!

I cherish in me the belief, that the charming Camilla will, at one time, vouchsafe to him all that which it was not in my power to give. Pale, trembling Camilla! perhaps very soon will the flowers of joy and love glow upon thy gentle cheeks. Thou never shalt learn for what thou hast to thank me. And thou, Alfred, when the joy of heaven swells in thy noble breast, thou wilt no longer think of me; but I—I will think on thee.

And when I have finished my laborious course through life, may I then be able to say, "I have made two human beings happy!"

I see him no longer. How dark is every thing around me here! but I have willed it,—and I am contented.

My thoughts accompany him with benedictory wishes,—day and night, in the morning as in the evening, accompany him.

My presentiment is about being fulfilled. Camilla is Alfred's happy bride. How will her lovely intellectual eyes beam! O may they be happy! Hear

me, Giver of all felicity—no supplication for myself shall longer weary thy goodness,—but make them happy—take every thing which I might yet have—ah, take my soul—and give, give to them all!

Let Camilla love him, even as I love him.

The bells ring! the bells ring! the great day is arrived—Alfred leads Camilla to the altar. How noble, how handsome he is! How lovely, how charming she,—how happy they both appear to be! “A noble pair,” whispered the people,—did I hear it—or have I read it somewhere? I do not know. The day is beautiful—the spring-sun warm and bright. All is bright and peaceful, my mind also,—I am happy and cheerful! No, it is not fever which colours my cheeks so crimson—it is joy—it excites my pulse—it makes my heart beat a hundred in a minute—hark! the bells ring. It is done; the clergyman has blessed them—and I too.

Now I am tranquil and alone, and quiet as the night, which reposes on all things; I pray in my heart for the happiness of those whom I so infinitely love. All that Providence does is good, is well—

even pain has its repose, its end—my pain also will find this in his happiness; for which I in a courageous moment laid the foundation. O beloved of my heart, I believe, I know, that through thy happiness, I also shall be happy. When the sun of thy joy beams in its full splendid midsummer glory, its warmth will also reach to me, the one hidden in shade. I will be the distant echo of thy song of joy! Feel and call thyself happy—and—I also will be happy—be joyful! and I also am—joyful; smile! and also I smile; thank God! and also I thank God; thank him inwardly.

(Poor fanatic! thy wings seem not long to have sustained thee. Under a later date, I find in the same hand which wrote this in joy and felicity, the following words, all the expressions of a quiet but broken spirit).

January 2nd.

My life is a feverish dream!

A better world—my most beautiful, my only hope!

(Years seem now to have passed on in which nothing is indicated; but from that which next follows, and with which a new epoch seems to have begun in the life of the Solitary, one may conclude that the angel of peace—whose palms, sooner or later, wave around the good, innocent sufferer—came nearer to her heart).

An infinitely sweet something has sunk into my heart. I know not what sentiment of peace, nay, of cheerfulness, attends me in my quiet wandering through the vale of life. And yet every thing around me here is unchanged, is cold; without joy, without love, as before. The change has taken place in myself. I expected my happiness from the world—and man; I was deceived, wounded and repelled; now I have alone turned myself to God, and begin to feel—that His peace is higher, greater than all the joy of the world.

A beautiful hyacinth, which blooms in my window, awoke in me cheerful feelings and thoughts. I see how it, unconsciously paying homage to the light and warmth, by degrees turns to the sun. The sun in return beams brightly upon it; opens, still operating, flower upon flower; lends to it colour, beauty, and fragrant odour. This to me is a clear image of the

human and the divine. Eternal sun of love! I will, like the flower, humbly turn to thy light, in order to receive life and joy from thee, which thou alone canst give.

I come from church. I have wept much, and am yet become happier. The feeling of devotion is one of the most beautiful, most charming, which we can experience upon earth. It is not joy, not sorrow; but something that elevates us above both,—it is a momentary return of the soul to its true native home—a feeling which, more than every deep-thinking demonstration, convinces us that we are children of immortality.

The text was taken from the Woman of Canaan. The preacher took occasion therefore to represent how bread is often withheld from us that we may learn to satisfy ourselves with the crumbs,—and how a submissive and flexible spirit is productive of happiness to its possessor, and well-pleasing to God. It seemed to me, as if all this was emphatically spoken alone to me, and I acknowledged it as truth in my heart. Ah, this restless heart, that has desired with impatience so much from the world and from man, that wished so ardently to possess all the good things of life, how it has been obliged to give up its wishes! It has, by degrees, learned to please itself with the crumbs; but it is also humble, patient—and as I hope

has become better,—and now first it enjoys the peace, the joy, after which it has striven so long, but in the wrong way. A flower, a bright day, an unexpected kind word—a lovely dream, a feeling of satisfaction, yes! a thousand little enjoyments, formerly not regarded by me, of which even the life most wanting in joy is not wholly deprived,—are now infinitely dear to me. I have by little and little learned to see how the true wisdom of human life consists in this, that it, like the bee, knows how to suck a drop of honey out of the smallest flower.

And if thou, lofty Director of my destiny, hast left me thus solitary upon earth for this purpose, that I may turn myself wholly to thee, and in thee find my all,—have I then, indeed, ground for complaint? If thou, All-merciful, wilt be to me father and mother, brother and sister, must not I then consider myself as blessed?

Why, ah why, have I not earlier sought my peace where I could alone find it? How many years of pain and depression might have been spared to me, if I had earlier known how foolish it is to turn oneself for comfort and joy to the world and man.

Give, thou solitary forsaken one, thy heart to God; but with that deep serious will, which allows of no

wavering, no return, no weakness. Learn to say, "Thy will be done, O Father!"—not merely with submission, but with love, with joy; and all despair, all depressing, hopeless pain, will for ever have vanished from thee!

When I in the evening lay myself down to rest, and the fatigues of the day and the unkind treatment of those for whom I have borne them have depressed my mind, I begin to pray "My Father!"—but scarcely have I said these words, scarcely has the feeling of their meaning penetrated my soul, than I weep the sweetest tears, and an infinite blessedness overcomes my whole being. My whole prayer then often consists of "My Father!" which I repeat many times; for they contain, as I feel them, every thing which I can express of childlike love, of inward confidence, of submissive hope, of devotional joy. Amid such feelings I fall calmly asleep,—and is it then indeed to be wondered at, if I believe myself cradled by the songs of angels?

Yes, I believe it—I must believe it—there is a comfort for every thing. There are beings more unfortunate than I have been, although the sensibility of my heart has increased suffering a thousand-fold

for me. There is, for example, the neglected invalid, consumed by pain; the captive, without hope of deliverance, of whose only joy—a spider—an inhuman hand has deprived him. But could not they also look up to God, and say “Our Father!” And the criminal, who has deserved his sufferings—who is more unfortunate than he? But if he feel repentance he may be forgiven,—the prodigal son can arise and go to his Father. Can the child of an eternally good Father ever, indeed, feel despair? Ah! He who taught us to call God our Father, He alone knew the human heart, and knew how to give to it a never-failing consolation!

The dead have comforted the mortal; and the voices which have exclaimed, “We suffer!” have also exclaimed “We are comforted!” The Gospel is spread out to the human race, and has opened heaven to it; but a murmuring, dissatisfied heart knows it not.

But the vicious—the debased into animal rudeness—the millions who live in darkness, in the night of misery and of ignorance? Friendly stars! ye who shine so brightly—mystic lights of heaven, full of hope I glance up to you. Ye are worlds for hope—

I regard ye as higher schools of education for the unhappy children of earth! Yes, confidently may one hope, God is indeed so all-good!

If our faith is firm, and our hope secured with a sure anchor, then is much won for our peace, and, in particular, heaven stands clear in our future; but, nevertheless, our hearts may still suffer much, and the burden of the day still appear intolerable, let human wisdom help it as it may. Defend us from discouragement—from the phantasmagoria of the imagination; and let us seek, every one for himself, the diversion of mind, the available little joys and springs of comfort, which lie so near to us, if we only look out for them. The great object is to preserve oneself good and pure, and then to suffer as little as possible. The means for that purpose are for all equally alike as different; but no one will miss them who has only his eyes open to see them.

Mercifully to direct the blind to them, ought to be the business of those whose lot it is on earth, so to say, to be eyes to the human race, to see for them and to teach them to see. O ye wise, ye noble and enlightened of the earth, be less of our schoolmasters,

be more our comforters! Shew us the mysteries of consolation—give light to pain—teach every one how in his outward condition, and according to the nature of his inward, he may find alleviation for his sufferings! Noble physician of the soul, grow not weary in seeking out remedies for all her maladies! How many blessings then will follow your footsteps, your divine labours!

The years which I formerly found so long, now pass on rapidly as swallows, because the days no longer appear burdensome to me,—because no hour of the day passes over without affording to me a cheering, enlivening feeling. This hourly, this to me principal comfort, I have found in prayer, in a constant remembrance of the presence of the Highest of Beings. I live and act always under the eyes of a father; and as I feel that I live, I feel and know also that his eye follows me, that his spirit is near to me, surrounds me with his peace, and infuses a joy into me which I may indeed feel but cannot describe.

I regarded myself formerly, by virtue of my position, as wholly useless in the world. Experience, to me dear experience, has taught me—that if we work, in the small sphere which has been confided

to us, only with truth and care, that we shall operate and labour according to the regulation which is the foundation of all good; and that pleasant consequences will sooner or later arise to us therefrom.

My health fails. The fulfilment of my duties in the family which has adopted me, becomes to me more difficult every day; but I endeavour to fulfil them according to the best of my powers. My heart has peace, is cheerful and quiet.

“Do not sit idly there, and do not look so happy, whilst I go about to seek for my snuff-box!” said just now the angry Countess to me. I recollect a time when I received reproaches on account of my downward devotional looks. Now my heart is so joyous that my countenance often receives the impression of it. Neither was the displeasure of the Countess at this time wholly without foundation; because, whilst one must take heed not to disturb the peace of others by an evidence of our own disquiet, one must not the less avoid shewing a satisfaction which may make a painful impression upon those to whom this feeling is a stranger.

I have again seen—him—her, have pressed their children to my heart! This family is an image of felicity. The happy husband and wife scarcely recognised me. That was not singular—I am so changed. I cherish in myself a wish—a fanciful hope—which I will not chase away—the hope of being able soon to float invisibly around them, and watch over their happiness.

How beautiful is the look of a man who labours with his full powers and in a sphere where his abilities freely exercise themselves, and still rise higher by the labour,—and where he is conscious that he lives for the benefit of his country, that he is esteemed by his fellow-citizens, loved by wife and friends, worshipped by his children,—that is the look of Alfred! How charming and touching is the expression in the countenance of a woman where all the requirements of her loving heart have been fulfilled, who lives in and for her beloved,—that is the expression of Camilla's face. And you happy little ones—you children, you darlings, one sees in your eyes full of innocence and joy of life, who brightly—the heaven of your childhood shines!

“In the autumn—when the leaves fall!”—said a

physician to-day, half aloud to the Countess, after he had observed me with thoughtful mien, and had inquired after my health. This termination of life sounds quite romantic,—but yet my life has had very little resemblance to a romance. Well then,—in autumn!—in autumn. An aspen-leaf, which has trembled in the waving of so many winds—will tremble no longer!

I make use of a remedy for my chest,—may it or may it not be beneficial—I am calm; formerly I wished to die—now I wish it less, since I have learned better to support and employ life. I have learned to worship God in all his works. There is nothing, be it small as it may, to which a great thought does not in someway unite itself—and which thereby does not become important and interesting.

The leaves fall—and I still live—and still lift joyfully my eyes to the gloomy heavens.

I have great bodily pain—and yet suffer so little—my soul is so happy!

“In spring—when the leaves shoot!”—says the

physician now. And I should almost believe it, if I ventured to listen to the quiet presentiment which abides in me, and which whispers to me; in spring, when every thing awakens to life and to joy, when the flowers send forth from opened cups their fragrant odour to heaven,—then will my emancipated spirit float forth and feel the air of the eternal spring; then will my yearning have reached its dimly divined of goal.

He is come to me with his wife, yet once more to see me—that was noble and kind of him. I found him changed. A dark fire was in his eye, and wrinkles which resembled those of discontent shewed themselves sometimes on his brow, that formerly was so clear and smooth. Ah, ambition has crept into his heart!—this, together with his talents, has lifted him upon eagle-pinions to the height of worldly greatness. He is become a great man, but has ceased to be happy. His amiable wife looked dejected, and the most careful toilet could not conceal the change in her melancholy countenance. It grieved me to see her;—ah, that they were but as happy and tranquil as I!

I am almost forty years of age. As solitary as I lay in my cradle, thus solitary stand I yet on the

edge of the grave. I have gone through life like a shadow, and my life has been like a shade. More and more it vanishes from my eyes; but the Eternal Father, whose will I have obeyed, opened to me a new, a glorious life, to which I advance with indescribable joy! The beneficial prayers which I send forth, and which I feel will be heard,—the feeling of a presentiment of heaven, that feeling of angelic peace which has accompanied me,—the tranquillity which no pain is able to disturb,—the delicious emotions of joy,—the pleasurable tears which I often shed,—oh, those dear holy messengers!—what do they announce to me other than that I soon shall behold the image of all love, of all perfection,—that the yearning spark will soon unite itself with the sacred fire from which it is sprung!

Here the feeble hand ceased to guide the pen,—the heart which had beaten so long with love and pain now reposes.

The Solitary is gone home to her Father—she is now happy!

THE COMFORTER.

THE COMFORTER.

WHO that has suffered—that has, in moments of deep and dark pain, found in his heart a world of misery, and then felt the necessity, cherished the heartfelt wish, to be comforted by a being from a higher world—has not, at times, hoped in enthusiastic melancholy to see an angel come down, who with merciful healing hand would touch the wounded heart, and solve the dark riddle of life and suffering?

Oh, when nature smiles around us in her glorious garment of summer,—when she, like an enchanting beloved one—affectionate, beaming, warm, embraces with pure joy man, her bridegroom,—then, if the human heart remain cold and reserved, and solemn as the grave;—if it alone cannot mingle its voice in the jubilant chorus of the earth,—if man fancy himself to be the only repulsed one,—how good were it then if a voice from heaven whispered the assertion to the unhappy one, “Thou also art

beloved! Son of suffering, endure with patience; thou also shalt one time drink from the cup of happiness!"

Ye bitter sufferings, inconsolable sorrow, despair—I have known ye! Heavenly voice, full of mercy and comfort, I have heard thee, and shall never forget thee. Yet to-day callest thou to me from the world of spirits. My soul hears thee, my heart understands thee! At this moment, in which memory has opened the leaves of my book of life, and my pen will recal the remembrance of long flown times, the still night has laid all around me to rest. I am alone, awake, and with me it is suffering which dissipate repose. The pale light of my lamp makes me aware of the shadow of a fearful form upon the wall near me, which reminds me of that which legends ascribe to the gnomes, those children of dust and of darkness. This horrible shape is my own—is my body. And this, so deformed, so heavily afflicted body is united to a soul which adores the beautiful in the inward being, as well as in the outward form.

Alone with myself and my shadow, surrounded by night and silence, I yet feel the smile float upon my lips,—I listen with quiet joy to the harmonious voices which rise up from the depths of my soul in humble offerings of praise to heaven; and I can only compare the delightful, clear peace which encompasses my soul, with the gentle moonlight that at this moment spreads itself over the moss-roses in my window.

There was a time when every thing in me was quite otherwise, in which I hated the world and myself; in which I wished that I had never been born.

In the May of life, during those days of spring in which the whole of organized nature, every created existence, becomes partaker of some drops of joy; in which gentle pinions rock mankind, and heaven vaults itself so loftily and brightly above us,—at that time I became acquainted with misfortune, and bitter were then my complaints.

It was in my drooping soul, as in the outward world, when, in our northern climate, the days towards winter rapidly decrease, the nights become longer, and the sun, like a dying one, seems only to rise, to say farewell, and then to sink again. I cherished not the hope that a new year would alter for me the course of things; on the contrary, I saw behind the decreasing light a night becoming ever more and more dark, spreading itself over all.

Happy are the dead; they suffer no longer! Happier still are the unborn, who have never suffered! Happy also are you, ye pitied fools; ye who laugh at your misery; ye who plait for yourselves crowns from your straw couches; ye who dream that ye are great and happy. Ye are pitied unjustly! Ah, ye feel, indeed, nothing, and your misfortune is concealed by the flowers of your madness. Happy are ye!

Thus thought I, thus complained I, as one evening I dragged myself along with slow steps, in one of

the darkest alleys of the park on the estate of my parents.

I was young and unhappy, and never—no, never—can one feel misfortune so bitterly as in youth. In maturer years the feelings become blunted—the blood flows more tranquilly; one is already accustomed to suffering—the way is not then so long to the terminating goal of all suffering. But when pain surprises us in youth, then that which is terrific in its novelty is increased by the yet uncurbed strength of the feelings by which that wild, fruitless struggle against fate is excited, whose consequences are hopelessness and despair.

Sickly and infirm at nineteen, I went through life timid and gloomy as an unblessed shade. I had been happy; therefore, I now suffered so much the more. I was full of life and health till my seventeenth year,—and so beloved—and so happy! Then I felt myself good, found the world so beautiful, regarded mankind as angels, and God as the Father of all. A tedious illness threw me about this time upon the couch of suffering, from which I arose again disfigured in the most fearful manner. People pitied me at first; but soon they turned away from me — my mother also, my brothers and sisters, did so. My heart became bitter; I felt the deterioration of my mind, and began to think myself abandoned by God and man. The careful education, the fine accomplishments, which, in my younger years, had been my share,

served now only to sharpen the sense of my misfortune. Never beat a heart in a human breast with more glowing love for freedom, activity, and the heroic virtues, which history displays in splendid prototypes. Never flamed more enthusiastically the spirit of emulation in the soul of a youth. Cato, Brutus, Scipio, Regulus, they were my prototypes—I wished to resemble them, if not to excel them all,—and my name, like theirs, should be honoured by a noble posterity. Renown and joy, with a rich, virtuous, and useful life,—that was the quickly vanished dream of my first youth.

Miserable compassion, contempt, forgetfulness—with a useless, sickly, joyless life—were the horrible realities which locked me in their iron arms on my awaking, which drew me down from my heaven, and darkened to me the whole world,—and God, and his beautiful sun, and his mercy towards his creatures.

Doubt, with its murmuring never-answered questions, arose in my soul, and midnight darkness inclosed my uneasily throbbing heart. An unending pain agitated my breast, whilst the panting breath moved it up and down.

“And how have I sinned that I should be so severely, so fearfully punished—for what have I become so unhappy?” asked I, loudly murmuring, as with tearful eyes I looked around me on the blooming scenes which richly and beautifully surrounded me.

It was a gloriously fine evening. The sun was

descending, all was tranquil—only a low murmur stole now and then, like a whispered declaration of love, between foliage and flowers through the wood. Every thing seemed to rejoice—I alone suffered! I wished to be the bird which thoughtfully twittered, swinging upon the green branches,—or the flower which beamed so splendidly, which gave forth such sweet odour,—or the butterfly which rested in its bosom,—nay, even the moss overgrown, happy, senseless rock against which I leaned;—only not man—only not the suffering, pitiable human being which I was!

I rested myself beside a lake which bounded the park, and which was encompassed by the most beautiful shores.

O how often had I formerly, with youthful pleasure and joy, guided my little boat over its dancing waves! How often had I, with my powerful arms, divided its gentle waters—kissed them with warm lips—and seen in the clear depths which mirrored back a cloudless heaven, the image of my pure heart, my fresh life! As formerly, still green, riant shores garlanded the quiet lake,—as formerly, the dark blue of the heavens reflected itself in its depths—my boat lay on the shore,—every thing had remained so unchanged, so kindly unchanged! I only was no longer like myself, was no longer the same. I found every thing here, excepting only myself.

I bowed myself down to touch the cool water with my glowing lips, but suddenly drew back at the sight

of my own detestable image, which, like my demon of misfortune, raised itself towards me more terrific than ever from the dark depths. It was to me as if I had been stung by a snake.

With disordered and painful feelings, I fixed my stony gaze upon the opposite shore. Joyful human voices sounded thence; and I soon perceived how gay couples swung around in a merry midsummer dance. Songs and laughter echoed back from the rocks around. I arose, turned myself away, and went deeper into the wood.

Through the opening of an avenue shone opposite to me the brilliantly-illuminated windows of the castle of my parents. They held there that night a festival to celebrate the return of my eldest sister to the paternal house. She had left it in her childhood, in order to be brought up by near relations in the capital; and now returned back an amiable bride, and was received by festivities which I now escaped as earnestly as I formerly had sought them.

“Nobody will miss me, nobody will think about me,” thought I, with bitter feelings, as I went away to seek for darkness and quiet. “Parents, brothers and sisters, make for yourselves pleasure—dance—sing! I shall never more sing, never more dance, never more laugh!”

Music now resounded from the castle, and brought to me the bewitching tones of my favourite waltz,—the joyous voices from the shore became louder and

louder,—I went, and went, and went,—they pursued me. O all ye unfortunate friends, ye who like me have felt yourselves without joy, without hope in the world—was it not then, during the innocent joy of others, that envy and bitter chagrin crept into your hearts? If it be painful to suffer undeservedly, then it is doubly painful to be obliged to say that one has deserved it, when one, for the first time, detects in oneself an envious and disdainful state of mind. I cannot describe what a feeling of infinite pain overpowered for some moments my whole being. My whole power was concentrated upon one point—upon the consciousness of my suffering. It was intolerable to me. “O my God! comfort me, comfort me!” exclaimed I many times with a hollow voice, before which I myself shuddered. “If thou be the God of mercy, then pity thou thy suffering child! Give me again that which thou hast taken from me; or open thy heaven—send an angel to me, an angel which shall tell me why I suffer,—or annihilate me! I am a grain of dust before thee—mingle me with the dust—only cause that I cease to feel, to suffer!” This wild, incoherent prayer—ah, I felt it—was only an audacious, bitter murmur. I should have thrown from me at this moment every earthly consolation, I should not have received them. An angel’s voice alone, an immediate revelation, would only, so I imagined, give me tranquillity,—could only give me back my extinguished hope, my faith on that which once had

been so sacred, so certain, and so clear, and which now to my feeling, unstable, and wrapped in darkness, left me without any support.

Every one who, like me, has been suddenly and unexpectedly plunged into the depths of misfortune will feel with me. People could not be so unhappy if, with the loss of all earthly hopes, they did not also often lose faith in a wise and merciful God. That gracious voice which exclaimed to us that not a sparrow, much less one of us, falls unobserved to the earth—that the hairs of our head are all numbered—this voice is not perceived in the tempest of passions—and if even it do find a way to our breast, it is not always able to silence the excited waves—for that wild, impatient heart desires then an instantaneous effect to prove its truth,—and if in our murmuring no consolatory feeling descends into our tumultuous heart—if our fate do not change, our sufferings remain the same,—then we despair—then—ah, how unhappy are we then!

With eyes fixed on the night I went onward, and seemed to myself like a child of the night.

All at once as it were a hundred weight fell upon my heart, that what I suffered, what I felt, might be only a repetition of that which others had felt and suffered before me. The bloody sweat of millions of human beings, the tears of millions, had moistened before me the path of pain upon which I wandered, and would moisten it after me; and shuddering, I saw

•

in thought, like ugly ghosts, darker than the night which encompassed me, all the sufferings and afflictions of the human race pass before me—the sufferings of the body, of the heart, of feeling, those never wearied harpies, which leave not the unfortunate, until he has, brother-like, extended his hand as a skeleton to death,—and in my own name, and that of all sufferers, I lifted up a piercing, painful, murmuring cry, and directed my eyes lamentingly to the stars. In tranquil, undisturbed majesty, they stood clearly sparkling above my head, and this immovable order, this eternally unshaken repose of heaven, awoke in my breast, ice-cold despair. “Let us die!” exclaimed I in thought to my brethren in misfortune, “Let us die—then all is at an end,—we have no compassionate Father in heaven!”

I had seated myself, and felt with gloomy satisfaction how the dampness of the night penetrated my dress;—I hoped that it would undermine my enfeebled health,—and my only wish now was for death. Whether it would conduct me now to a more friendly fate, or only annihilate my afflicted being, it was welcome to me, dear to me, and inwardly longed for by me. Nobody would weep for me,—all my family would, like myself, regard my death as a gain. I knew it, knew it only too well!

Towards midnight the music was silent, and I heard how the dancers on the shore departed by degrees, amid cheerful sounds. All at length was still. It had

•

become dark, and the stars, whose glittering pomp had seemed to mock my pain, were wrapped in clouds. The whole country lay hidden in deep night, and at a distance the thunder was heard to roll. All this accorded more with my inward feeling, and did me infinite good. I threw myself down upon the ground and wept bitterly. I wept long, and felt thereby a beneficial alleviation. Gentler feelings pressed into my heart, and combatted against the bitter ones. The thoughts so precious to me of a reward on the other side of life, for sufferings patiently endured, of a wise, all-compassionate Father came again and again. I was now able to pray to him with a submissive heart. I prayed,—prayed for consolation—for light and strength, with that fervent, nameless prayer, whose strength opens heaven, and seems able to press with the sighs of the heart, to the throne of the Eternal. I had, whilst I prayed, raised myself up, but soon sank down again to the earth, enfeebled by my feelings and by pain, deprived even as much of thought as of power, and dull tones of lamentation laboured forth from my panting breast.

The night was warm, and so tranquil that no breath of air was sent forth; yet it seemed to me at times as if a trembling passed through the leaves of the poplar, under which I lay with my face to the earth, and each time an involuntary shudder passed through me. Three times, it seemed to me as if a hand passed over my head lightly and caressingly, and

with the pleasant sensation which I perceived therefrom, a delightful remembrance of my childhood livingly awoke within me. So had Maria, the little beloved one of my childish years, caressed me, when we, fatigued by sport and exercise, rested upon the soft grass together. I had perceived this sensation, when the little one raised her feeble hand from her death-bed and laid it, for then she could no longer speak, as it were in blessing on my head.

Was she near to me at this moment? Was she, the glorified angel of earth, sent by the All-merciful to comfort me? O how my heart beat as these thoughts arose in my soul!

I believed with certainty that something supernatural was near me, but, although the hair of my head rose upright, yet my heart felt no fear. What, indeed, does one fear when one is deeply wretched? Nay, even the most gloomy revelations of the spiritual world terrify no longer. The feelings of horror which they infuse, are welcome; they refresh—they raise us above earthly pain; and seem less horrible than this. It is, however, a consolation which, as we believe, approaches us in a beloved shape from that unknown land at whose portals all lights of the human spirit are extinguished—therefore all becomes tranquil in the tumultuous breast, and all the pulses beat in adoring expectation. Thus operated in my soul the thought of Maria's presence. I called her softly by name—besought her to lay her hand upon

my heart,—and amid feelings of peace and sweet repose, such as I had never felt before, I fell into a kind of dreaming stupefaction. During this, it appeared to me that I saw Maria clothed in white, and indescribably beautiful, sit near me, in her hand a palm-branch with which she fanned me—whilst I, in no condition to speak or clearly to think, pleased myself for some moments only by the feeling, how well it was with me. All at once I perceived Maria seize me by the hand, and amid feelings of indescribable satisfaction I fancied myself floating away at her side over the earth towards heaven.

“I am dead!” thought I, and an unspeakable sensation of joy passed with the thought through my soul.

I wished to turn myself round, that I might yet once more behold this earth upon which I had suffered so much—but mists dimmed my view.

The clouds environed me ever more densely; I felt how the frosty damps chilled my breast, and dulled the glow which the restless beating of my heart had occasioned. “It is good!” thought I; “that is the enfolding of the grave, the embrace of death—how beautifully they cool! soon—soon shall I be transformed.” Again it became dark to me, as if I were not yet dead, only dying. My mind became every moment more benumbed; it became ever darker and darker before my eyes—a dull soughing, as of distant woods, was in my ears. Yet clearly and calmly

remained to me the consciousness of a guiding hand, even in the moments in which I entirely seemed to lose the consciousness of my own existence.

A sudden feeling of pain, which thrilled through my heart like a dagger-stroke, recalled me to thought and consciousness. I found myself lying upon the earth as shortly before, and should have regarded all as merely a dream had I not still felt the soft, warm hand which inclosed mine. I was feeble and powerless. Without raising my head, I exclaimed, "O Maria, why didst thou not take me up into thy bright home? Why am I yet upon earth, where people suffer so much and so hopelessly—why, ah, why must I still suffer?"

"God wills it," replied a voice, as charming and melodious as we represent to ourselves that of angels. Impatiently murmuring, I asked, "And to what purpose should I live and suffer?"

"In order to be better thyself—to be useful to others."

"How can I, miserable worm, be useful to others?"

"Through thy patience—through the example of thy submission."

"Ah, I have strength to feel my suffering, but not to bear it!"

"Pray!"

"God's image is darkened in my heart—I cannot pray! I have seen the abyss of pain—have understood the sufferings of men,—and I see—I understand

God no more! O be not angry, pure, holy angel! Thou who livest in light—look mercifully upon the son of darkness—enlighten me—comfort me!”

“Yes, I will comfort thee!”

“Tell me, compassionate angel, has the Eternal sent thee to me?”

“He has sent me to thee.”

“His eye thus, then, sees the tormented worm creeping in the dust? The suffering creatures of the earth are not unobserved by Him?”

“He sees, he numbers them all.”

“O Maria! say, if God be all-good and merciful, wherefore all the wretchedness, all the sufferings of men?”

“It is sufficient for thee to know that he will afford comfort to all, and will sometime cause all suffering to cease.”

“I cannot take hold on this comfort—I do not understand how happiness can ever outweigh pain. Happy angel—thou who wast already in childhood snatched away from the earth—thou hast never known its afflictions—thou understandest them not! Hear now one of its victims speak! Hear, and if thy incorporeal being can yet cherish human feelings—if this heart, familiar with the felicity of heaven, be not cold for foreign suffering—then shudder!” And from the depths of my agitated heart I exclaimed—“We suffer, we suffer! We call for help, and the earth opens her abysses, and heaven looks coldly

down and despises us. The night of despair covers us—the vulture sits on our heart, and rends from it piece after piece—and gnaws and gnaws. We call on death, but death comes not. We curse our life—we blaspheme——” I paused, thrilled through with horror!

Every thing was still for a moment, and I endeavoured, with a convulsive effort, to stupify my mind; for I dreaded to hear that scornful laughter, to see those dark abysses, to feel those pangs of agony.

“Listen!” said the angel-voice suddenly, strong and delicious as a harp-tone. “Listen to the song of victory from my lips, which the suffering children of earth will some time sing altogether in the bright heavens!” And I heard the angelic song, which sounded like a voice out of the clouds, and yet quite near to me.

O thou human anguish,
Thy abode was brief!
Heart, enfranchised captive,
What a blessed relief,
By suffering purified,
Now to God allied!

To the bright blue heaven,
From the vale of care,
Let thine eye be given,
Think not on despair!
See above, in brightness,
The dwelling of uprightness!

Though our life's track leads us
Through a foreign land,

'Tis but the course that speeds us
To the bright world's strand,
And afar off, we
The Father's house can see.

There our hopes were tending,
Amid storm and fear;
Blessedness unending
Now surrounds us here.
The appointed goal is gained,
The victory is obtained!

Never more in sadness
Shall we look to heaven,
Spring's eternal gladness
To our hearts is given;
And like the saints above,
Henceforth our life is love!

Here no mist surroundeth,
Error all is o'er;
Word of doubt confoundeth
Our weak faith no more,
For truth so pure, so clear,
Shineth only here!

The song ceased, but I fancied I still heard it. The pain also in my soul ceased. I felt how every bitter feeling within me dissolved itself by degrees, and gave place to gentle, consolatory ones. Sweet tears ran down my cheeks, and a feeling like that of the peace just now sung, overcame for a moment my being. Soon, however, the torment woke again, and doubt raised itself again from the depths of my soul. I folded my hands and prayed, "O pitying, gentle angel, forgive my weakness—leave me not—continue

to give my soul light! Tell me, what indeed is that for which we here struggle and suffer?"

"The right, the true life, of which this earthly life is only the shadow. An eternal mounting upwards, an eternal approach to God, the fountain of truth and bliss. That light, that peace, that sanctification and pure joy, which we here seek for in vain, we shall there find."

"Ah," I replied gloomily, "night encompasses me—I cannot take hold on the light."

"Behold, the red of the morning breaks," cried the voice; "behold, how it diffuses light around us; how every object, which just now were yet veiled in nocturnal shadow, appears in brightness, beauty, and truth. Thus also on the morning of eternity will its sun diffuse light over all the perplexities of life,—then wilt thou understand wherefore thou hast suffered; only continue good, only continue submissive—and all will be right. Son of suffering! thou also wilt one day drink from the cup of felicity!"

"And the poor tempted ones, they whom misfortune leads to crime, whom misfortune degrades—what fate may they expect?"

"God is merciful and just—adore him!"

"And the wicked,—they whom a horrible destiny seems even from their cradle to have destined to be the scourge of their fellow beings?"

The angel was silent a while, but at length said with a gentle, solemn seriousness, "Wherefore these

questions, this disquiet, child of dust? There is a God—worship God!”

It became brighter in my soul. “O,” said I softly, “I understand thee. God is God, and that says every thing,—my God also,” added I with deep and joyous feelings.

“And thy Father!” said the angelic voice.

“Yes—my Father,—and a Father who pardons! O Maria, tell me—if I, too weak to bear my burden, voluntarily laid down a life which I felt to be intolerable, would not this Father receive his unhappy child into his paternal bosom?”

“Do not mislead thyself,” replied the voice; “he who gives way before the trial, can never deserve the reward. O suffer with patience—hope with confidence! Deprive not thyself of the reward which awaits thee—of the well-pleasing of God, of the good pure witness of thine own conscience, of the blessings of those to whom thou canst be upon earth a support and a comfort.”

“But if I see that I am a burden to others as to myself, if——”

“Do right and worship God,” replied the voice, in a severe tone. I felt pain. At length I said, dejectedly, “Life is long, infinitely long, for the unhappy, who have on earth no other, better lot to expect; and the terminating goal of suffering appears to him too distant for it to operate as a constant alleviation of ever-returning pain. Thou, thou, in

the enjoyment of ever-ascending happiness, measurest not, remarkest not, the course of the years; thou canst not think what an infinitude of duration the days, the hours, nay, even the minutes, have for the unfortunate, who counts his pangs by the beating of his pulse! If thou, heavenly comforter, wert ever near me, I would not complain; but when thou returnest to the bright home from which thou out of mercy hast descended, what will become of me? How shall I be able to bear those long, long hours, which the united pains of the soul and the body make so insufferable?"

"I will not leave thee," replied the angel, whose voice was again infinitely soft and gentle; "I will assist thee to endure those hours, and to feel those pains less. God has strewn everywhere the seeds of consolation and joy; we will seek for them together. We will be submissive,—and all will become good; we will be submissive—and peace will descend into our hearts. We will worship God together,—together seek for the mitigation of thy pain; and if thou must weep, thou shalt no longer weep alone." At these words the voice of the angel became as it were stifled by emotion.

"Do the immortals also shed tears? thought I; and, amazed beyond all description, as well by the words as by the emotion that followed them, I raised myself up, and ventured for the first time to contemplate the white figure which sate at my side. Trembling

I sought for the dear, well-known features of Maria; I found them not. A lovely, to me, strange countenance, veiled with compassionate tears, and brightened by the dawning crimson of the morning, bent over me, and a warm, soft, rosy mouth impressed upon my brow an affectionate kiss.

“O my brother, my beloved brother!” whispered the same angelic voice which went so to my heart, “recognise thy sister, whom God has sent to thee to comfort and to love thee,—who will never more leave thee!” and she threw her arms around me.

My bewilderment was so great, for a moment, that I fancied I had lost the use of my mind.

My sister endeavoured, in the most heartfelt affectionate manner, to overcome the excitement of my mind. She locked me in her arms, let my head rest upon her breast, and with sweet loving words she hushed to rest as it were my agitated feelings. I became by degrees calmer, but for a long time could not persuade myself that it was only my imagination, excited in the highest degree, which had made me fancy that an angel—yet what do I say—was it not an angel, although in a human form?—had been sent by God for my consolation! Yes, that was she, in the most beautiful signification of the word, and I felt it every moment deeper. In order to give my mind the most perfect clearness, she told me in a few words the accident which had conducted her to me. Informed of my illness, of its

consequences, and the unhappy state of my mind, which my gay and fortunate brothers had described as bordering upon insanity, she had, immediately on her arrival at the paternal house, inquired after me, and learnt that I, more gloomy than common, had betaken myself into the park. As she, tolerably late at night, again inquired after me, and heard that I had not yet returned, this amiable sister, under the pretence of going to rest, stole away from the hall, and into the park, to seek out her afflicted brother. She was about to call my name, when my lamenting voice reached her ear, and guided her to the spot where I had sunk down overpowered by suffering, and almost insensible. She softly approached me, lingered quietly beside me, and heard how I called on the name of Maria, and besought her to comfort me; and her prudence and goodness suggested to her the thought of availing herself of this mistake, which my violently excited state of mind and my heated fancy had made, in order to afford me consolation in a manner which would make the greatest impression on my overstrained mind. Towards the conclusion of our conversation she thought that the human loving sister, deeply affected by my sufferings, would be more able to contribute to my comfort than one belonging to the world of spirits, and she let her feelings speak for me. "My brother"—thus she ended her explanation,—"be not displeased because I was thy angel! Maria

would, however, have left thee; and I will never, never more leave thee!"

I could not overcome my amazement. "And those oracular answers which thou gavest to me?"

"Thou wilt find their foundation in the Gospel—there is the fountain of comfort and of wisdom; we will together learn to gain them therefrom."

"And that charming consolatory hymn," I said, with tearful eye, "was it, then, only thy composition?"

"It was truth, which, although feebly composed, by me was put into the form in which thou now hast heard it. When we shall sometime hear, in a better world, the victorious songs of the suffering children of the earth, and shall even mingle our own voices in them,—how different, my brother!—how altogether another thing will these harmonies of eternity appear in comparison with feeble earthly tones! Ye heavenly felicities, which no human eye has seen, no ear has perceived, which no human understanding can comprehend,—how, indeed, could a mortal voice be worthy to sing ye! Ye patient sufferers, it will sometime be your lot to do so!"

"Yes," replied I, with emotion, "I may perhaps sometime unite my voice with these; but thou, sister, wilt sing yet more beautiful among the happy ones arisen from the grave,—happy on this and on the other side,—thou angel of God!" My sister made no reply, but looked up to heaven with a glance,

in which patient submission was so expressively depicted, as if she saw beforehand that severe fate would also strike her, and she offered up her own will as a sacrifice.

She took my arm within hers, and conducted me slowly back to the house. The ever-increasing daylight drove away the shadows from around; morning breezes played in the foliage, and the most delicious twittering of birds raised itself in the fresh odorous air. All this appeared to me an image of that which occurred in my own soul. In my night-enwrapped mind light had also arisen; I felt the gentle zephyrs of consolation, I heard the song of hope. Silently went on my sister and myself beside each other; but her beaming glance, which now was riveted upon me, now passed over the enchanting objects which surrounded us, and then raised itself to heaven, seemed to invite my feelings to follow in its holy flight.

The first beams of the sun gilded the windows of the Castle as we approached it—the same windows whose glittering illumination some hours before had made so painful an impression upon me. Now I contemplated them with quite different feelings; and as I turned to the beaming torch of day, I repeated softly, with deep and delightful emotion, Thomson's glorious prayer:

“ Father of light and life! thou Good Supreme!
O teach me what is good! teach me thyself!
Save me from folly, vanity, and vice,

From every low pursuit ! and feed my soul
With knowledge, conscious peace, and virtue pure ;
Sacred, substantial, never-fading bliss ! ”

I perceived the change within myself with rapture. The nocturnal scene had made a deep impression upon me; and however natural every thing which had occurred might be, I still could not help ascribing it to a supernatural guidance. In the moment of pain and of despair I had called upon an angel, and an angel had descended to me with kind, long-wished-for words of consolation and hope. The voice of my glorified Maria could scarcely have produced a greater change in me than the voice of my gentle sister did.

She was one of those beings who only seem to linger upon the earth to alleviate its misery, and in whose pure soul heaven has stamped, as it were, its image. Gentle, lovely, wise, serious—she went through the world like a loftier spirit, who only takes part in life that it may sweeten the lives of others. She found her happiness only in the happiness of others; and if she now felt the sufferings of others bitterly, it was because she kept her gaze too firmly fixed upon the terminal goal of the journey through life for her to permit the brightness of her mind to be gloomed by the difficulties of the way. And precisely this repose in her own soul enabled her, wisely and considerately, to select and apply the right method for the alleviation of every sorrow.

I soon perceived the beneficial influence of her gentle and prudent guidance. She did not permit the temporary flight which had elevated my soul to sink back into cowardice, but maintained it upright, and sought to bring it round to tranquil, deliberate, and independent strength.

She soon discovered that ambition was my chief passion, and that the loss of all that could promise success to this passion was the principal cause of my deep melancholy. She judged wisely, that this passion, like all strong passions of the soul, could scarcely be speedily brought into subjection; and endeavoured only to give it another direction, to set to it a better, nobler, less selfish, and to me a yet attainable object.

“Thou canst not,” said she once, in our confidential conversations, “become a Scipio, a Camillus, a Leonidas; but thou mayst be a Socrates, a Plato, or, which is still better, one of those Apostles of Christianity, whose sacred and heroic virtues have deserved immortality on earth. Believe me, my brother, the world needs for its happiness more wise men than heroes; and the happy, noble man, who has given to humanity one comfort, one refreshment, may die with a more beautiful consciousness than that which sweetened the last hours of an Epaminondas. Thou hast received from nature remarkable gifts of mind, memory, acuteness; exercise and cultivate these. Thou hast knowledge—strive to acquire more and better grounded knowledge. The field of mental

cultivation is immeasurable, and the flowers which it bears are noble everlastings. The richer thy harvest becomes, the more (to continue the simile) thou garnerest of that which is mature and solid, all the more wilt thou be able to extend of the fruit of thy labour to the greatly-needing hungry many, and wilt deserve the blessings of the present and future generations. Let us never forget, that what we undertake and accomplish, if it be actually good and beneficial, must be for the use of the kingdom of God."

Thus spoke my good sister, less, as I believe, in the conviction of my ability to reach the prototypes which she presented to me, than to animate and inspire my sunken spirit.

In proportion as my earthly fortune opened itself again to me, my courage and my powers reawoke. The horizon extended itself, as it were, before my gaze. Full of hope, I extended my arms towards the ascending sun, in which I now saw, as formerly, the image of light which would beam upon my earthly life.

I began to labour for my new object with all the zeal which my weak health allowed, and might perhaps have exerted myself beyond my powers, if my gentle and prudent sister had not here also stood by my side, watchfully and warningly.

She induced me to seek for diversion of mind, and by agreeable light occupations or pastimes to cheer my spirits and to strengthen my powers. I had talent for drawing. She encouraged me to practise

this beautiful, serious art, which enables us to perpetuate beloved memories, and at the same time to forget the oppressive hours of the present. How often, when I endeavoured to preserve her gentle features on paper, have I forgotten myself; the whole world, time, and every thing which could be important and fatiguing, whilst my whole soul lived with delight in my beloved work. How often, whilst I have been representing the attractive and fresh objects of the country, the leafy trees, the calm lake, the bold heights, the shady valleys, the grazing herds, the clean turf-covered cottages, and the heavens veiled with transparent clouds, how often has the feeling of peace and quiet satisfaction penetrated my soul!

The great condition for that pure enjoyment is this, that the heart is free from every root of bitterness, every sentiment of ill-temper and envy; and in a short time, these disturbers of peace were entirely driven out of mine.

I had formerly read history with the same mind with which children see a magnificent spectacle, with admiration for the splendid and the great, without in any way as a whole connecting and embracing it. I read it again, after years, and still more, misfortune, had matured and formed my understanding, and found a totally different impression from this reading.

In contemplating the fate of the world, my own vanished from before my eyes. When my thoughts roamed through centuries, my lifetime seemed to

lose itself in these, like a drop in the ocean,—and when the misfortunes of millions lay open before my sight, I was ashamed of thinking on my own. I learned, in one word, to forget myself. And when my weak vision could perceive in these pictures of history only a confused swarming mass, when I lost there the traces of a wise and good Providence, when I saw upon earth only a disorderly succession of errors, confusion and misery, then my sister turned my glance to heaven.

I looked up to heaven, listened to the voices of the good and holy upon earth, who—in combat, in pain, in death—have been raised with confidence, joy, and celestial power, to announce to us a higher aim than earthly happiness, another home, a higher light;—listened to the promises of immortality, and to the presentiments of it in my own breast, and learned to embrace in my heart the consolatory belief which already here in life diffused brightness over the darkest night.

I looked up to heaven. Light came from above. It beamed down into my soul. I comprehended that here below all things are only in the beginning, and full of hope; I cheerfully seized again my pilgrim-staff, composed as regarded my fate, and certain of my object. From this time my heart had continually peace; and it was not difficult for me to seek out many materials for happiness and joy, wherewith I was enabled to build upon earth the cottage of my

content. Among these, I have mentioned pleasant and diverting occupations, and I must yet add — society,—not that on a great scale, to which I was still always opposed, and which, on account of my exterior, could only awaken unpleasant feelings, but that composed of my own family and my own friends, who did not alone endure me, but who endeavoured with kindness that I should, by degrees, find pleasure in their joy, and even learn to contribute to it,—truly often enough, like a blind musician contributing to the pleasures of the dance.

My sister and myself took all possible pains to make my temper, violent by nature, mild and cheerful. She, by warnings, friendly counsels, but principally by her tenderness, her care to surround me with little pleasures, which nobody knew better how to arrange and to make piquant than she did; I, by watchfulness over myself, by repressing all irritability and sensitiveness, and for the rest, by perfect submission to her guidance.

“Whoever,” said she, “is deprived of outward charms, and perpetually requires the attention and cherishing care of others, must labour still more than others to acquire that mild, kind, amiable temper and behaviour, which is alone sufficient to win the devotion of others,—and which make all little attentions which are shewn to them become so agreeable, all greater ones so light.”

I followed her counsel. I endeavoured to be

amiable,—I became beloved, and I deeply felt the happiness of being so.

The first great pain which befel me after my return to life and joy, was occasioned to me by her, who had formerly so affectionately consoled me. Ah! my angelically good sister was doomed, as she herself had divined, to experience herself on earth the bitterness of grief. He—who was worthy of her in every respect, and with whom she led an angel's life—died suddenly, and her tender, only child followed him soon afterwards. As tranquilly and mildly as she had formerly said to me—"Let us be submissive," she now repeated to herself these words,—and was perfectly resigned. Kind and considerate for others as formerly, her bright peaceful eye was ever attentive to the wishes and necessities of others; but they remarked that something in her was changed—her joy was gone—she was in heaven. Her life on earth was now only a slow descent; not that of an extinguished flame, but of a descending sun, which, whilst with bright, although dying beams, he lets his farewell illumine this world, stands about to be reilluminated with new-born strength and purity in another.

She was no more!—and alone—and deserted by her—I feared for a long time to lose myself,—but I soon felt that she and her consolations continued still in my heart my guardian angels. I collected my powers, and remained resigned to the will of heaven.

From the Eternal home, where she lives blessed and again united to her own, she casts sometimes

perhaps, a glance upon the grateful brother whose good angel she was on earth. O that this glance might never find me unworthy!—that this glance might not look down without pleasure into a purified and sanctified heart. My life has not come up to the splendid image which we beforehand conceived, I have become no Socrates nor Plato, but still am wise enough not to weep over it. We had—I in particular—had had quite too much confidence in the powers of my mind and my understanding. I soon observed that my ability to comprehend on a great scale, and to think, was very much confined. Something—I know not what it was—it seemed to me as if it were my own skull—presented to my thoughts, when they had arrived at a certain point, a wall which was to them as insurmountable as the walls of my room were to my feet; and my spirit was, alas! so constituted, that its flight rather led me into than out of the clouds. Thus I was also here obliged to give up my ambitious hopes, and found myself, when I, at length, had accustomed myself to fruitless combats and endeavours, only the better for it.

My sister had above all things turned my mind to religion; and this, which overcomes all human passions, poured her tranquillizing balsam also over the waves of my ambition and worldly vanity. And, in truth, if we acknowledge ourselves as work-tools in the hand of Providence, who has created us, how foolish it is then to wish to be anything different to that for which He has destined us!

When therefore I saw my inability to raise myself above mediocrity in the path of knowledge and of science—I ceased to strive after it, and calmly renounced a renown which was not destined for me. I employed therefore all the greater pains to enable that portion of myself, the perfection of which is impeded by no wall, by no, “so far and no farther,” but to which, on the contrary, infinitude stands open. Every one who has earnestly begun this work will find that he creates his own happiness.

In the sphere which my inward eye can command, I endeavour so perfectly to comprehend all, so to profit by it and to employ it, that it actually may be advantageous to others and to myself. I am, according to my ability, active in outward life,—and never do I alleviate a torment of the body or of the soul of a fellow-being without experiencing an increase in my happiness. When the infirmity of my body compels me to inactivity—I am quiet, and occupy my thoughts more exclusively with the beautiful future which religion has opened to us on the other side of the land of care. By my patience under suffering, and my, if not always merry, yet always friendly state of mind, I endeavour not to make unpleasant the attentions and care which people shew to me, and in particular, make my brothers and sisters aware how easily a temper, cheerful and resigned through God, can bear outward adversity. They are kind and amiable, and—I know it, and say it with tears of joy—there is no one amongst them who would not

willingly give up some of the days of his life to beautify mine. And yet I can give nothing more to them, than—my sincere friendship,—do little more for them, than many a time to think for them,—and always to feel with them. My sick-room is now their confessional, now their council-room, and often also their temple of joy;—and when they are happy, they will just as willingly gladden me with the view of their happiness, as I will gladly see it, and take part in it.

The love of my parents is again given to me since I no longer embitter their days by impatient murmuring over my fate. Ah, have I now, indeed, reason to complain of my fate. The heaven of my future stands brightly open there, and my present life is agreeable. I love still more virtuous and amiable people, sympathise in their fate, and am loved by them in return. I can do some good—my heart has peace,—but all that I now am, all that I now say, that have I from thee, my good sister. Thou awokest me from the depths of despair, didst press me to thy loving breast—gave my soul comfort, my life courage,—my powers a new object—my temper gentleness! When I cried to heaven to send to me an angel, how mercifully was I heard! Thou didst come, my sister! O delightful comforter, gentle instructor!—although vanished from my sight, thou livest eternally in my heart; and every blessing, which I have from thee, I bring again to thee in humble gratitude!

A LETTER ABOUT SUPPERS.

A LETTER ABOUT SUPPERS.

Stockholm, November 20th, 1828.

BEST AMALIA!

Thou inquirest what I do in the great city of Stockholm, whilst the Parliament waves its strife-proclaiming banners, and whilst the wise and the unwise heads of the capital knock one against the other, and all the uninitiated expect to see the public good start forth from the mighty blow in a new-created Minerva-shape. Thou askest what I do during all this?—Ah, my love—I eat suppers, and yawn! The day before yesterday I was at a supper; yesterday, I was at a supper; to-night also shall be at a supper, and if I am still alive to-morrow, I shall, alas, also to-morrow eat a supper. “A supper!” I hear thee ask—“is there then anything so horrible in it?”

My Amalia, thou happy daughter of the country, remain with thy sewing and thy flowers,—let the pure air kiss thy cheeks, sing thy simple songs, close thy day in peace and joy, eat thy frugal evening meal, go to bed at nine o'clock, thank God, and pray to

Him that He may preserve thee from city life and suppers!

But if thou wilt become acquainted at a distance with these pleasures of the great and elegant world, then accompany me in spirit for a few minutes, and thou shalt be initiated into the mysteries of suppers.

We must adorn ourselves with flowers! Having been invited eight days ago to take part at the festival of pleasure, we must, in order to salute it, call up our freshest smiles!

The clock strikes eight. We leave the glass with a parting glance to ascend into the earriage which is standing ready, which rattling will convey us through the streets of the city to where the beaming blaze of light beckons to us from a long row of windows.

Not a word about disarranged curls, rumpled dresses, and the thousand other little travelling discomforts. One must forget something. One gets all ones array again into the speediest order, and reassumes that becoming smile which one had left upon the steps.

The doors of the saloon are opened, and we float in. Is it the simoom or the sirocco which is wafted towards us from the throng of people and lights? One of the two it certainly is, and thou feelest already a universal drowsiness and disabling diffuse themselves over thy intellectual powers.

The greetings are over, we seat ourselves. God be thanked for good rest! If no earthquake happen,

we shall not soon rise again. Closely seated together, the ladies mutually review each other,—pay compliments, and say polite things to each other—drawing up their mouths the while as if they were sucking in Sugarland. The eyes twinkle, the heads are in motion, the feathers sway here and there, the silken dresses rustle; there is a greeting, a questioning and an answering; there is a murmuring and a bustling, becoming by degrees ever fainter and fainter, like a dying-away storm. The murmur ceases—it begins again—it dies out—and all becomes still.

They get the card-tables ready, carry tea about, exhibit engravings. People play and are silent—people blow and drink—people examine and yawn.

It is hot and sultry. Slowly creeps on the time. The heat of the rooms increases, curls become straight, certain noses become red, the ears burn, the eyes fill with tears;—one gets uneasy, one turns oneself hither and thither, one puffs and plagues oneself.

People try to begin a conversation. Bubbling ideas might enliven ones languishing feelings like fresh springs of water; but ah! ideas have gone out of our heads like the pomatum out of the hair, and we find ourselves hardly witty and clever enough to talk rationally about the weather. And if thou do exert thyself sufficiently to say something particular, thou wilt receive for thy answer a polite “Yes,” or “No,” or “Hum,” or “Indeed!” which will as

much as say, "My good one, do not give yourself any trouble!"

See, there now approaches thee a gentleman with his hat in his hand, in order to make some diversion in the entertainment. What does he say to thee? Thou smilest really so gently. Was it something civil? 'No.' Something witty? 'No.' Something stupid? 'No.' Well, was it something, then? 'Yes, but something which was absolutely nothing. The poor fellow, he was rather sleepy, had lost at the card-table; and was, moreover, under the influence of the supper-sirocco. What then, indeed, could he say other than—it is terribly warm here!'

In order to awaken thy own sense, which is slumberous against thy will, thou lookest about in the numerous company to find some amusement in the remarks which thou canst make. In vain! every thing is so uniform. Good ton and refined education have so polished and trimmed, have so far removed all marked form, all originality, that one is aware of no other difference in these individuals than the trifles which shew themselves in dress, and those which merciful nature, that enemy of melancholy uniformity, always knows how to preserve between nose, mouth, eyes, etc.,—but this is all.

They carry about ices and confectionery. Some refreshment is perceptible in the room and the senses. People stick their teaspoons into their mouths, and enjoy, and are silent.

In the side-rooms one perceives the noise of the trumps which are struck by the players on the table. The company in the saloon sets itself now in motion—people turn themselves round—people rise up—they set down the little plates—they draw breath.

The piano is opened. Good. The magic tones of music will probably put to flight the demons of ennui. They thrust in a half-timid, half-bold lover of music, that he may play. He asserts that he cannot, but still seats himself at the instrument. He reddens, he turns pale, he trembles, but strikes forcibly upon the patient keys, and accords them to a song. Now, thank God that it is ended, and has not gone off worse.

Real talent after this makes itself heard, unpretending but calm in the consciousness of its power. They are songs from Frithiof which are sung. Music, poetry, both are beautiful. The voice of the singer is certain and agreeable, although the heat and the crowd of people in the little room take away from its tone. The last accord has sounded,—why this silence in the company, this immoveableness,—is it delight, rapture, inspiration? Repressed yawns and sleepy eyes make answer. The singer has sung to the walls. The supper-sirocco had disabled all feeling.

Dimmer and dimmer burn the lights, the heat becomes more oppressive, the air more sultry. People feel that they are just about to sink into dull unconsciousness; people compel themselves to be merry;

they talk about fashions, dinners, members of parliament, and so on; one tries to squeeze it out of oneself; one overdoes it; one tells lies; one speaks slander, compelled by necessity, and in anxiety to say something however—and wishes oneself afar off.

But slowly wear away the hours, the minutes stretch and expand themselves in the same way. One feels the need of doing so oneself.

Yet once more one contemplates the engravings, but takes them in one's hand upside down. One still talks, but says yes instead of no, and no instead of yes; one suppresses yawns at the risk of being choked; one feels oneself weariful, other people intolerable; but one still keeps on simpering and smiling kindly.

From eight to nine—from nine to ten—from ten to eleven—from eleven to twelve, have we sat quietly and patiently in this little hell of heat and courtesy.

Our strength is at an end, midnight has struck, and now certainly people would either fall into a fainting fit or die; but the doors of the eating-room are opened, odours of eatables operate like eau de Cologne upon our nerves,—a voice proclaims, “it is served”—and people are saved!

The company rise hastily, and in a mass. They go out in couples, or one after the other, into the eating-hall, where an immeasurable table, a new land of Canaan, offers all dainty gifts of plenty and of luxury to the fainting wanderers coming out of the wilderness.

People troop about the table; people throng together; each chooses a place for himself; this one will not sit by that; that one will not sit by this. At last they are seated.

Now goes on the eating with the greatest and most earnest zeal. People eat and eat and eat. People feel a desperate desire by anything of activity to indemnify themselves for the long inactivity and tedium to which they have been subjected, and they seize upon the only one which offers itself. One eats till one is satisfied, more than satisfied; but one still eats on with unalterable zeal. At length the dessert is brought in. The mammas, satisfied themselves, cleverly empty the plates into their reticules and pocket-handkerchiefs—probably for the children who are left at home,—whilst the daughters read with great interest the devices upon the sugar work, which upon its summit contains unexampled stupidity, and exercise their wit in guessing charades.

The meal time, thank God, has an end like every thing else. The money of the host changed into veal-cutlets, tarts, and wine, rests in our stomachs. With this burden we withdraw again into the saloon, stand there yet a while *pour l'honneur*, and talk of nothing; take leave at length, and wearied body and soul drive home, that we may lie down in bed at one or half-past, with overladen stomachs, with empty heads and hearts, which have preserved from the lately passed hours no other remembrances than such as have for

their consequences on the following day, weariness and indisposition.

In the mean time the host and hostess of the supper go about amid extinguished lights, and congratulate one another that the history is come to an end, and comfort themselves for the expense of the supper by its having been splendid, and that people have had a deal of pleasure with them. Deceived, short-sighted mortals!—wait—soon will your grateful guests thank you with new suppers, and the bill for ennui, which you now owe them, will be perfectly balanced.

There hast thou, my Amalia, a sketch of a great city supper, and, with few exceptions, the suppers of the capital. They are a mass of sleepy sisters, whose mother, called Laziness, and whose foster-mother, Custom, continue to conduct them about with low curtseys from house to house. People have called them a thousand unbearable names, but people still delay to proscribe them, because Laziness and Custom are stiff ladies who have known how to gain respect, and against whom people cannot offend unpunished.

If people ridicule their hoop petticoats, they run the risk of being called foolish and self-willed.

If thou fancy that a touch of November spleen have thrown a dark shadow over this supper-description, I will not exactly say no to it; but in the principal features it is true, and not caricatured.

It is incomprehensible to me how so many clever

people can come together in order to fatigue themselves so.

If the genius of Pleasure were to publish a proclamation to its worshippers, with the invitation to enjoy themselves, I fancy to myself that its contents would probably be as follow:—

“Friends of pleasure, of cheerfulness and joy, old and young,—ye who would enjoy life, its short hours of rest, its fleeting minutes,—fly, fly suppers!

“If ye would, during the long winter evenings, drive away the spirits of ennui, then listen to my recipe:

“Assemble connexions, acquaintance, and friends, but not too many. The supper-sirocco arises from the crush and heat.

“Be ye only a few; be however cheerful! Kindle the lights in your rooms, but still more the lights of understanding and of refined jest in your heads. Let the easy fire of joy be lighted for each other. Yet, once more, be cheerful, be kind, and, if you can, be witty! Dance, play, sing,—but do it all so that it may give you pleasure! Let nothing begin heavily, nothing end heavily! Entwine with light hands the garland of innocent joy; and for that purpose extend to every one, unpretendingly, his little flower!

“Is the pleasure of conversation dear to you, let the fire of ideas circulate among you; throw one to another the sparks of jest, which shine, but do not burn. Let thought reply to thought, feeling to feel-

ing, smile to smile, like melodious echoes, or rather like those gentle and charming tones which the lightest touch calls forth from the attuned harp.

“The well-cared-for mind must not, however, forget the physical—the soul must not forget the body. Give to this a refreshment; but let this also be light, be given without formality, be as it were a pleasure. If people sit down to table with serious, important faces, with knife and fork and napkin, to eat—then it is a labour.

“‘People eat to live; people do not live to eat,’ says a wise man. Would you give yourselves pleasure, then eat and drink only to be able afterwards to laugh the more cordially.”

When the all-wise Creator commanded that day and night should for twelve hours govern alternately our little globe, it certainly was by this his intention that man, his noble but weak child, should repose in the lap of the night, that he might be able to work and to enjoy himself amid the light of day. Therefore, let the end of the evening be the end of your day and your pleasures. Let midnight find you quiet, and taking your rest; and closing the day in peace at the right time, sing with the noble and amiable poet Franzén—

After an evening
By calm joy attended,
And cordially ended,
Sleep we so calmly, and waken well pleased.

O heaven! the clock strikes eight—the horrible supper-hour! The carriage is already drawn up, my husband stands ready, and I have not one single flower in my hair. Good-night, happy Amalia, thou wilt soon go to bed, and I must yet arm myself for a campaign. To-morrow, if I am in a condition, I will sing—

After an evening
In eating expended,
Yawningly ended,
Sleep we so badly, and wake out of sorts.

THE END.

LONDON:

Printed by Manning and Mason, Ivy Lane, St. Paul's.

